THE ROYAL

FOURPENCE.

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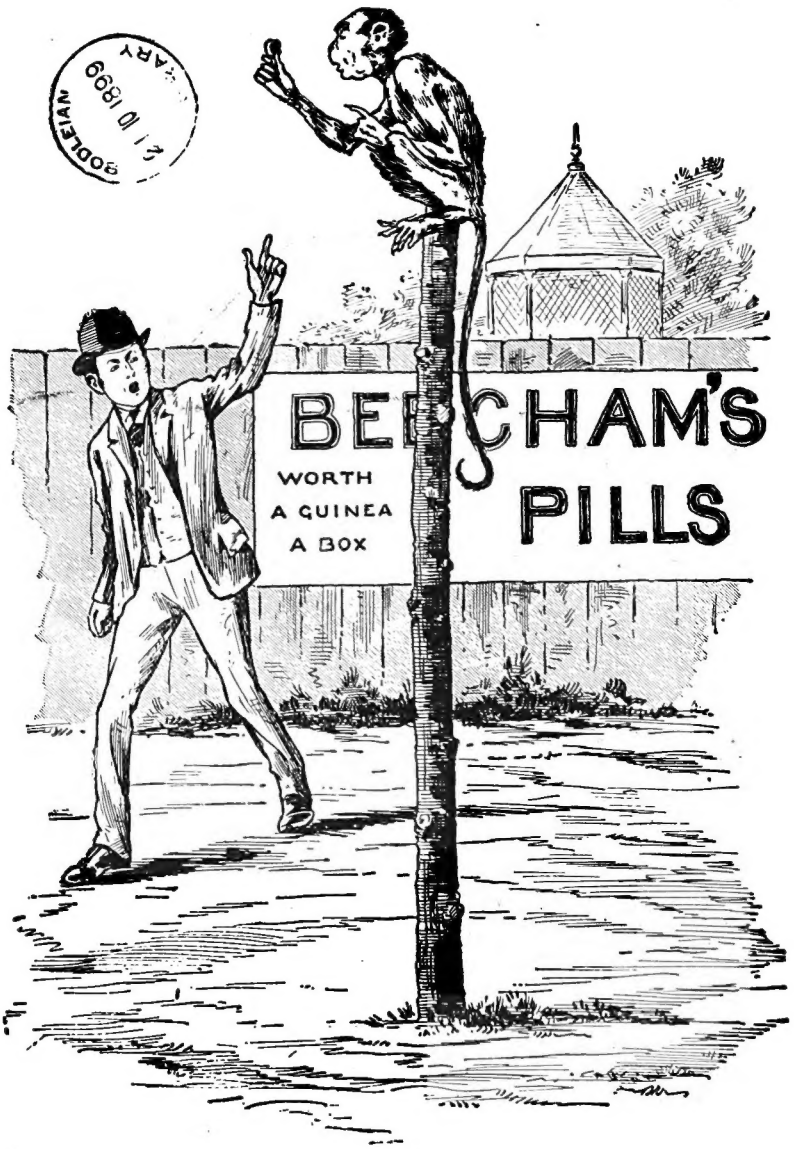

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A PUZZLE.

A monkey, having purloined a box of Beecham's Pills, perched itself on the top of a 10ft. pole and was watching the owner 4 yards off. The man proceeded to walk round the pole in a circle; as he walked round the pole so the monkey moved in unison, keeping its face towards the man. Query: When the man had completed his circle round the pole had he been round the monkey?

NOTE.—The Proprietor of Beecham's Pills cannot undertake to answer any correspondents in reference to this problem. If you cannot satisfy yourself as to the solution you should appeal to your friends.

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Russia's Advance Towards India

Conversations with Skobeleff:

"Bokhara is a wretched place to live in." According to his account, the Khanate is so unhealthy that a Russian occupation is only possible by the - - -

AID OF

ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.'

"WE OUGHT TO BE FRIENDS- - Why should two European powers quarrel over a few Asiatics? WE OUGHT TO BE FRIENDS. WE STRONGLY WISH IT."—*The Russian Advance towards India.*—C. MARVIN, page 88.

"EGYPT, CAIRO.—Since my arrival in Egypt in August last, I have on three occasions been attacked by fever. On the first occasion I lay in hospital for six weeks. The last attacks have been completely repulsed in a short time by the use of your valuable 'FRUIT SALT,' to which I owe my present health at the very least, if not my life itself. Heartfelt gratitude for my restoration impels me to add my testimony to the already overwhelming store of the same, and so doing I feel that I am but obeying the dictates of duty.—Believe me, Sir, gratefully yours, A CORPORAL, 19th Hussars."

USE ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' { Soothing, Cooling, Health-Giving, Refreshing and Invigorating.

You cannot Overstate its Great Value in keeping the Blood Pure and Free from Disease.

HEADACHE AND DISORDERED STOMACH.—"After suffering two-and-half years from severe headache and disordered stomach, and after trying almost everything, without any benefit, I was recommended by a friend to try ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT,' and before I had finished one bottle I found it doing me a great deal of good, and am restored to my usual health; and others I know that have tried it have not enjoyed such good health for years.—Yours most truly, VERITAS."

ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' assists the function of the LIVER, BOWELS, SKIN and KIDNEYS by Natural Means; thus the blood is freed from POISONOUS or other HURTFUL MATTERS, the Foundation and GREAT DANGER of CHILLS, FEVERS, WORRY, BLOOD POISONS, &c. It is impossible to overstate its great value. THERE IS NO DOUBT that, where it has been taken in the earliest stages of a disease, it has in innumerable instances prevented a severe illness. Without such a simple precaution the JEOPARDY OF LIFE IS IMMENSELY INCREASED.

The effect of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' upon any DISORDERED, SLEEPLESS, and FEVERISH condition is SIMPLY MARVELLOUS. It is, in fact, NATURE'S OWN REMEDY, and an UNSURPASSED ONE.

CAUTION.—*See Capsule marked* ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.' *Without it you have a worthless imitation.*

Prepared only by J. C. ENO, LTD., 'FRUIT SALT' WORKS, LONDON, by J. C. ENO'S PATENT.

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THE GREAT HAIR PRODUCER AND RESTORER.

The Finest Dressing, specially prepared and Delicately Perfumed. A Luxury and a Necessity to every Modern Toilet.

Monsieur Philosophow is commanded by

HER MAJESTY The QUEEN of GREECE

to forward cheque for the six bottles of "Harlene" duly received.

Crown Prince's Palace, Athens.
H.R.H. Princess Marie of Greece writes:—"Messrs. Edwards' preparation, 'Harlene' for the Hair, has given entire satisfaction."

Palace of Prince Royal, Athens.
H.R.H. The Duke of Sparta requires three bottles of Edwards' 'Harlene' for the Hair at once.

Full Description and Directions for Use in Twenty Languages supplied with every bottle.

1/-, 2/6, and (3 times 2/6 size) 4/6 per Bottle, from Chemists, Hairdressers, and Stores all over the World, or sent direct on receipt of Postal Orders.

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"I hereby certify that I have examined Edwards' 'Harlene,' and find that it is absolutely free from injurious substances, in fact, 'Harlene' is a first-class preparation. It stimulates the roots of the hair, and restores its colour, consequently it is an invaluable remedy for Baldness and other fungoid diseases of the hair. 'Harlene' is invaluable as a dressing. It preserves, strengthens, and restores the hair. I can conscientiously recommend this elegant and useful preparation."

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Elegant in design, and of fine power and sweetness of tone, from 5/- per month, sent carriage paid on receipt of first instalment. **Photo. Catalogue sent Post Free to any "Royal Magazine" reader.**

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is what I smoke.

. . It is a mixture of pure Tobaccos, scientifically blended, free from added scent, flavouring or sugar, which only spoil the natural aroma of the natural leaf. It differs entirely from any tobacco hitherto put before the public. Give it a trial. Sold in 1 ounce packets, and 2, 4, and 8 ounce Tortoise shell Tins. The quarter-pound and half-pound Tins are recommended for keeping the tobacco in good condition.

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after paying hard cash for a pair of Boots to find that you are robbed of all comfort in wear and smart appearance in looks.

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by writing to

Southall & Co.,

Boot Experts, Dept. 17
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for their New Catalogue (free) and self-measurement form, it is arranged to make it easy to select the boot you require.

For London & District, Catalogue can be obtained and measurements taken at

Branch Office:-
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Sample Pair of Southall's Patent Boots, 14/6.
Sample Pair of Lace Boots, "Thor" brand, 14/6.

Postage 6d. extra in British Isles. Europe, 2/-, Colonies, 3/6.

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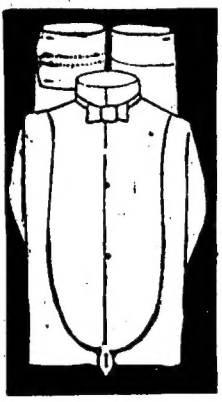
WHITE SHIRTS fitted with our REVERSIBLE CUFFS

(See Nos. 2 and 3 described below)

WEAR TWICE AS LONG as ordinary Shirts.



THEIR economic advantages are apparent at a glance. By permitting the shirts to be worn twice with absolutely fresh cuffs each time they reduce the laundry bill by one half, and the shirts with less frequent washing wear twice as long. The invention has commended itself to hundreds of thousands of customers all over the World.

UNLAUNDRIED WHITE SHIRTS.

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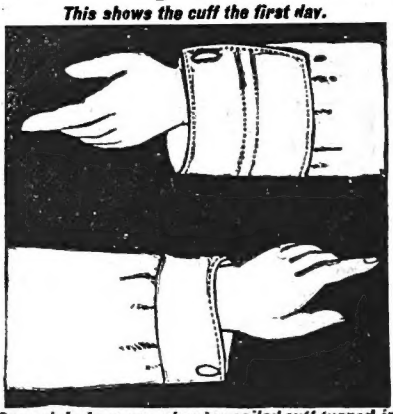
No. 2.—"THE CONQUEROR." Reversible cuffs, to button back or front. **3/3** each, **18/9** half-dozen, post free.

No. 3.—"THE CITY SHIRT." Fit for a duke to wear. Reversible cuffs, and to button back or front. Sample free by post, **3/9**, or **21/6** per half-dozen.

When ordering, mention size of Neck-band, and say whether to button back or front.

This shows the cuff the first day.



Second day's wear—showing soiled cuff turned in.

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TRADE MARK

WILD CATTLE IN CADZOW FOREST.

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Always Neat and Tidy.

MARTIN-SILENT SADDLES LADIES' & GENTS.'

2 YEARS' GUARANTEE.

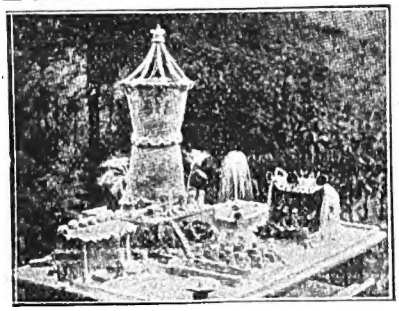
Of all agents or direct. Send for Price List.

105 14/- EACH

MARTINS—BIRMINGHAM, LTD.

Martin's Silent Pump Carrier will not scratch the enamel, 6d. per pair.

HARBUTT'S PLASTICINE



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Perfectly Clean and Harmless—fit for Drawing Room or Nursery.

An inexhaustible delight to children, they can MODEL ANYTHING with it.

Indispensable to Artists.

The "Complete Modeller," with full instructions ... **2/10,** post free.

The "Child's Delight" (smaller) ... ... **1/3** "

The Illustration shows the work of a child.

From **WM. HARBUTT, A.R.C.A., Bath.**

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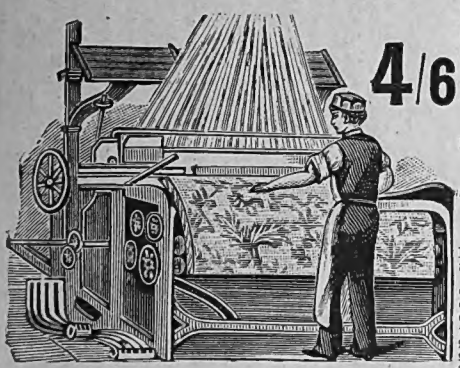
IN 1, 2 & 4 Oz. TINS *THE KING OF PIPE TOBACCOS.*



4/6

To Readers of "The Royal Magazine," Nov.'99, on receipt of Postal Order or Stamps, value (Regd.) We will send you the LARGEST GENUINE REVERSIBLE CARPET in BRUSSELS FINISH, with RUG, ever sold at the Price, direct from the Looms to any address, on receipt of amount. Suitable for drawing-room, dining-room, bedroom, &c., bordered and woven in Brussels Patterns, as an advertisement for our goods, thus saving any middle profit. Remember these are woven, and are made of a material almost equal to wool. Thousands of these carpets have been already sold at double these prices.

SPECIAL OFFER.—2 CARPETS and 2 RUGS, 8s.

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Illustrated Bargain Catalogues of Carpets, Hearthrugs, Table Linen, Curtains, &c., Post Free if, when writing, you mention *The Royal Magazine.*

PRODIGIOUS SALE OF THE "PRUDENTIAL"

TURKEY PATTERN CARPETS

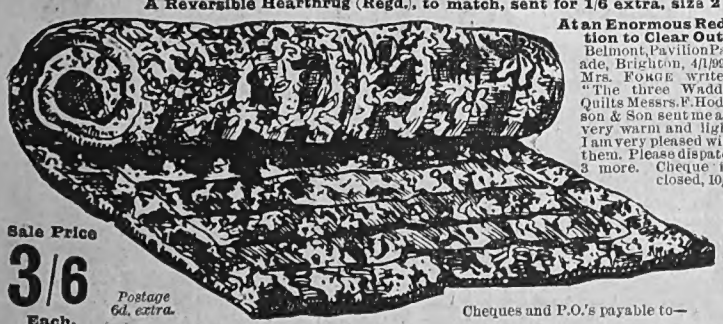
(Regd.)

Reversible, woven throughout, bordered, richly blended in several colours to suit any furniture. These goods cannot be distinguished from Real Brussels when laid down, and cannot be excelled in durability.

6 ft. by 6 ft. ...	2/11 each		9 ft. by 15 ft. ...	12/6 each
6 ft. by 7½ ft. ...	3/11 "		10½ ft. by 12 ft. ...	11/6 "
6 ft. by 9 ft. ...	4/9 "	REDUCED SALE PRICE	12 ft. by 12 ft. ...	12/9 "
7½ ft. by 9 ft. ...	5/11 "		12 ft. by 13½ ft. ...	14/6 "
9 ft. by 9 ft. ...	7/3 "		12 ft. by 15 ft. ...	15/9 "
9 ft. by 10½ ft. ...	8/6 "		12 ft. by 18 ft. ...	19/6 "
9 ft. by 12 ft. ...	9/6 "		12 ft. by 21 ft. ...	22/6 "

When ordering, please mention if for Bed, Dining, Drawing, or Sitting Room, and any particular colour preferred.

A Reversible Hearthrug (Regd.), to match, sent for 1/6 extra, size 2 yds. by 1 yd.



Sale Price 3/6 Each. *Postage 6d. extra.*

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Belmont, Pavilion Parade, Brighton, 4/1/99—Mrs. FORGE writes: "The three Wadded Quilts Messrs. F. Hodgson & Son sent me are very warm and light. I am very pleased with them. Please dispatch 3 more. Cheque inclosed, 10/-"

A STOCK OF 10,000 PATENT WADDED QUILTS, TORALIUMS, or BED COVERS, Reversible

(AS ILLUSTRATION).

Covered with Oriental Soft Sateen and on reverse side another beautiful floral design. Size 56in. by 60in. These Quilts are offered below anything in the Wholesale Trade, and cause the greatest consternation to the buyer, wondering how they can be produced for the money.

SPECIAL OFFER!

Three Quilts for 10/-; or Six for 19/6; or Twelve for 38/-

Cheques and P.O.'s payable to—

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These Boots are made on the latest ANATOMICAL PRINCIPLES and are designed to meet the natural requirements of the foot. They afford adequate support, allow for normal expansion, and promote elasticity, thus ensuring PERFECT EASE and COMFORT to the wearer:

Cut from selected B.B.M. Calf Skins, beautifully soft, takes a high polish, asbestos lined, damp proof, will not creak. Posted in 5 days. Carriage Paid British Isles; Europe, 2/; Colonies, 3/- extra postage.

Thousands of unsolicited guaranteed Testimonials.

ADDRESS—

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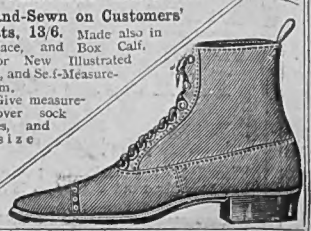
10/6 MADE TO MEASURE.

Direct from Factory.

Real Hand-Sewn on Customers' own lasts, 13/6. Made also in Tan, Glace, and Box Calf. Write for New Illustrated Catalogue, and Self-Measurement Form.

N.B.—Give measurements over sock in inches, and usual size worn.



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RUSHDEN, NORTHAMPTON.
Largest Bespoke Boot-makers in the Country.

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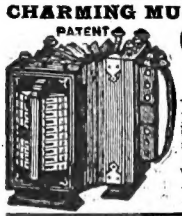
THE MODERN

STOVE POLISH

SAVES ELBOW GREASE

CHARMING MUSIC for WINTER EVENINGS



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200,000 TESTIMONIALS.

Special Offer to the Readers of "THE ROYAL MAGAZINE."

Campbell's "Gem" Melodeon	price only	6/9
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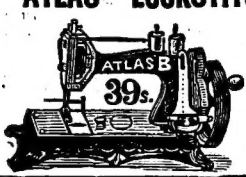
All lovers of music should at once send for Campbell's New Illustrated Privilege Price List of all kinds of Musical Instruments for Season 1899, now ready. 150,000 sent out yearly. Send 1d. Stamp to—CAMPBELL & CO., Musical Instrument Makers, 116 Trongate, GLASGOW. *Est. 50 years.* **Beware of worthless imitations!**

"ATLAS" LOCKSTITCH MACHINE 39s.



Equal in size and quality to any machine. Works by hand or treadle. Four years' guarantee.

To ensure satisfaction, machine sent on receipt of 5s. P.O. for ONE MONTH'S TRIAL. Balance can be paid 5s. MONTHLY. Write for designs and samples of work—**The Atlas Sewing Machine Co.**, 132E, High St., Camden Town, London; or 63, Seven Sisters Rd.; and 14, High Rd., Kilburn. Mention this Magazine.

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SHILLING BOTTLES **SKIN LOTION**

GIVES A BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXION.

clears off Pimples, Blotches, Spots, Roughness, all Disfigurements, and Cures Irritation. Develops a Clear, Smooth, Healthy Skin.

Direct from the Potteries.

CHARMING QUEEN WARE WHITE CHINA TEA SERVICE.

8/6 Carefully Packed. Package Free.

This really superior Tea Set is now offered direct to the public by the manufacturers at first cost. It comprises 12 cups and saucers, 12 plates, 2 bread and butter plates, 1 slop bowl, 1 cream jug, in all 40 pieces. Every piece in the service is exquisitely finished and guarantees satisfaction to every customer.

Our **Breakfast Service**, also in **Queen Ware White China**, is exceptional value. It consists of 6 breakfast bowls and saucers, 6 breakfast plates, 2 bread and butter plates, 6 egg cups, 1 slop bowl, 1 sugar bowl, and 1 milk jug, in all 29 *pieces*: for **8/6** Carefully packed; package free.

Send 8/6 for Sample Service to-day.

Half Guinea and Guinea Parcels made up of all kinds of useful articles in the **Queen White Ware.**

STEPHEN PEARCE, 18, PAYNTER ST., FENTON, STAFFORDSHIRE.

MILLIONS of Garments **SAVED YEARLY** by using **MATHER'S**

NIGRINE

The Jet Black Marking Fluid for Marking Linen, Cotton, &c. Will not injure the most delicate fabric. **In Bottles at 6d., 1/-, 2/6, and 5/-.** Of all Chemists and Stationers. Sample Post Free for 13 Stamps.

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OGDEN'S
GUINEA-
GOLD
CIGARETTES
ARE AN
EXCELLENT
SMOKE.

this evening when the Bank of New Zealand Bill got into committee, that members were still disposed to talk on the question of the dismissal of the Bank President. There was so much irrelevant garrulity as to lend colour to the assertion of Mr Hogg, that members were merely "talking to the galleries," and that it was in no respect that any work would be done until after supper.

The member for Mornington was responsible for giving an acrimonious turn to the debate when he asked if Mr Watson had made a request since the Bill was last before the House to be heard before a committee. The Premier having replied in the negative, Mr Thompson said it was evident that an extra year's salary was satisfaction to Mr Watson's wounded honour. The Premier was so much hush-money the price of Mr Watson's silence.

The Premier: I know nothing whatever of that.

Mr Thompson "I said at first that the circular was a bit of bounce; an attempt to levy so much more blackmail from the House"

The Premier deprecated the tone of these remarks, which reflected both on Mr Watson and on members of the House for what the House had done, or could do. It would prevent an inquiry, for the Bill had to go to the Council, which might refer it to a committee and have the evidence of Mr Watson taken (Mr Taylor: "There's no fear of that.") The Premier hoped that members would allow the Bill to proceed.

Mr Taylor said that he was astounded to hear the words in clause 2, which had been passed, that the office of president was not to be abolished till the end of March, 1889, and Mr Watson was to have till the end of June to bring an action for further compensation. He and other members understood that the President was to be got rid of immediately. (Mr Tanner and Mr Flatman interjected that such was their understanding.) Mr Taylor added that there was a good deal in what had been stated about hush money. He hoped that the Bill would be re-committed, and the clause altered so that the office of president would be abolished at once, that Mr Watson was to receive his month's salary next, he feared that he would play havoc with the affairs of the bank.

Mr Smith said that he found a feeling prevalent, both in Wellington and Christchurch, which was expressed in the question 'Does the Premier really wish to pass the Bank Bill?' If, as the Premier had stated, the President was all that could be desired, what on earth were they trying to get rid of him for? If he were in Mr Watson's place and had such revelations to make he would not accept two years' salary, but would go to the Courts for satisfaction. It would be money well spent if it cost Mr Watson the amount of compensation to clear up the matter, but members ignored his remarks, and talked wide of the mark. Further latitude was at this point given to the debate by Mr Carson moving that the Chairman

The Chairman said that he could not allow imp... members were not act... ud Mr Taylor at ..., substituting an ... a member of the ...ay to arouse the ...agent of someone

Mr Taylor was ...ce of imputing ... were generally ...es. He was ...me

...son is ..." The ... denied ...ith Mr ...im or ...mend-

...l busi- ...no pro- ...ed power- ...Watson in ...an he now ...ner members ...how why they ...nt, but he added ... reasons why he ...ppointed.

...hed at 11.50 p.m., when Mr Mil... ...ent was rejected by 45 to ... ...lar immediately moved a fu... ...ment, which was also opposed ...emier. Mr Taylor contrived, i... ...e vigilance of the Chairman, ...al speeches travelling consid... ...d the scope of the amendmen... ...nple, he declared: "I am ... ...rophesy now, and I say th... ...two and a half years the... ...another Bank of New Zeala... ...ee Bill necessary," a predicti... ...oked several "hear hears." A... ...ok exception to the "quiet m... ...the Premier when piloting th... ...h Committee. In the tempor... Mr Millar from the It... was defeated on the ... ...y minutes past mid... ...ed, after having been ... consideration. The ...ndered back int... ...ory, several m... ...s on the ...roduction ... the sub-

...sion on ...d the ...down ... was ...emier ...auses ...greed ...se till ... that ...ers to ...ed, so ...hed at ... year's ...h the ...cretary

...gistrate Hodder, ...ianx, while four ... were gathered in ...mmediately came ...at six o'clock to

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A WONDERFUL LAMP WICK.

To prevent Smoke, Smell, and Explosions in Oil Lamps by the use of a Chemical Wick is an accomplishment of first rate order, notwithstanding the apparent smallness of the lamp wick as a subject at first sight. Not many people know that oil lamps lighted up Noah's Ark, and that they gave off offensive smoke and smell then as now, the only drastic change effected in them in four thousand years being the introduction of mineral oils, which cause explosions, of which there were no less than one hundred and six **Fatal Examples** in this country last year—and sixty-three deaths from the same source have been recorded for the first six months of the present year!

Stemp's Process Wick comes in opportunely indeed. It Prevents Oil Lamp Explosions, Requires No Trimming, sheds a bright white light, and emits neither smoke nor smell.

So Important is the improvement in Light, Cleanliness, the Saving of Trouble, Waste of Oil, and the great Safety secured by the use of Stemp's Process Wicks, that **Her Majesty** has graciously issued **Royal Letters Patent** to the Inventor.

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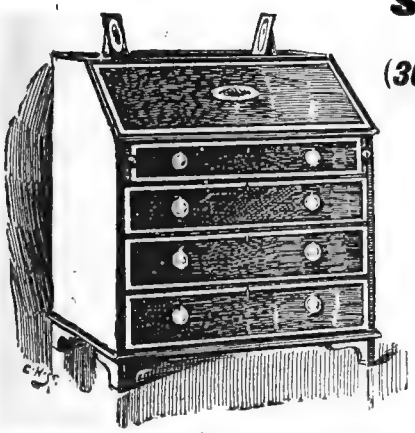

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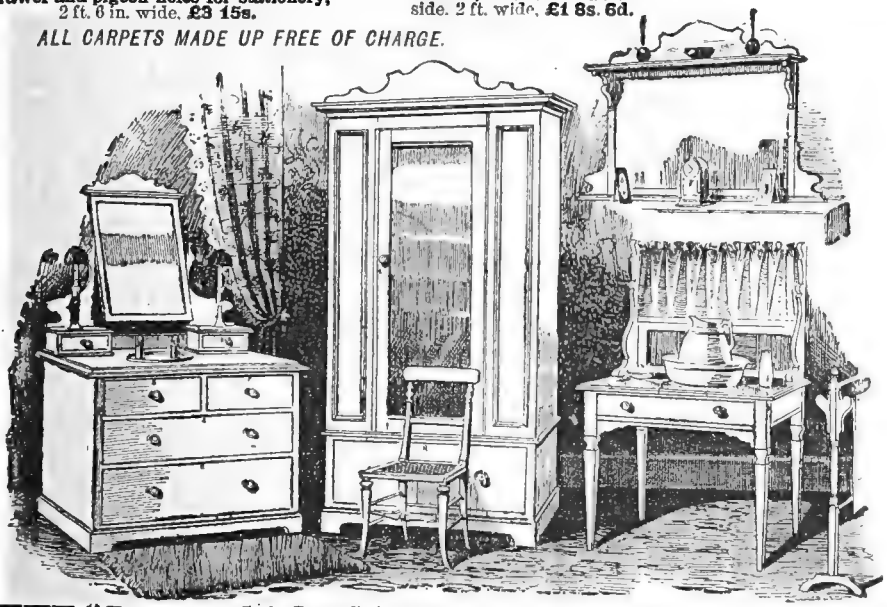

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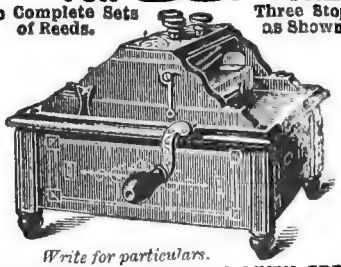

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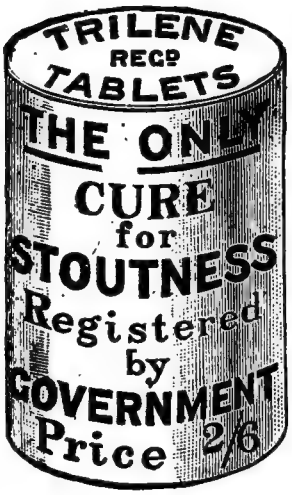

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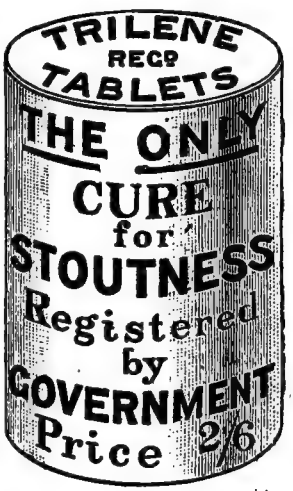

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"GENTLEMEN,—In reference to Trilene Tablets, I may say that my wife found the greatest possible benefit from the use of them, and their action was rapid, as my wife was for many years growing too stout, but the Tablets soon reduced the same completely. You have our united thanks, and if I can do anything to promote your interests, I will freely use my utmost endeavours to do so.
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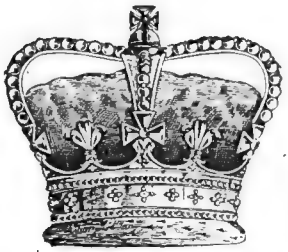

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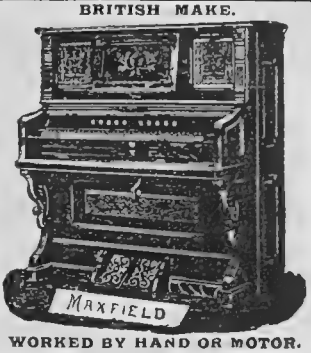

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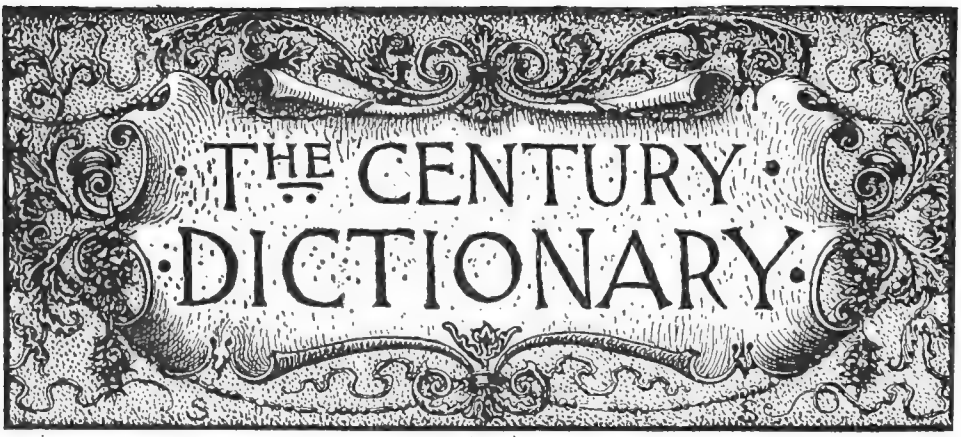

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THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

CONTENTS FOR NOVEMBER, 1899.

		PAGE
OUTSIDE COVER designed by MONTAGU BARSTOW.		
"IN CÆSAR'S PALACE" ... ... From a Photograph by Russell & Sons.		*Frontispiece*
THE WOMAN OF DEATH. A Serial Story ... ... Illustrated by Victor Prout.	GUY BOOTHBY	3
THE HOUSE IN WHICH COLUMBUS DIED ... ... Illustrated with a Photograph.		12
THE ART OF THE CAMERA ... ... Illustrated with Photographs.	RODERICK GREY	13
HOW CYCLISTS ARE ATTRACTED TO CHURCH ... ... Illustrated with Photographs.	STANLEY WHITE	20
SNAPSHOT INTERVIEW ... ... Mr. GUY BOOTHBY. Illustrated with Snapshots.		24
A PRIVATE CHIVALRY. A Complete Story ... ... Illustrated by E. F. Skinner.	ATHOL FORBES	27
HOW I SHOT MY LIONS ... ... Illustrated with Photographs.	H. SETON KARR	32
HEART'S DELIGHT. A Poem	L. G. MOBERLY	39
THE MOON CURSE. A Complete Story ... ... Illustrated by Alec C. Ball.	BEATRICE HERON MAXWELL	40
THE GENTLE ART OF SMILING... ... ... Illustrated with Photographs.	R. DUFF	47
THE CURATE AND THE ACTRESS ... ... Illustrated by Lewis Baumer.	RAFAEL SABATINI	54
A SINGING SCHOOL FOR CANARIES ... ... Illustrated with Photographs.	MARGARET COLLINSON	62
THE WOMAN WHO WAS NO GOOD. A Complete Story ... ... Illustrated by C. Dudley Tennant.	W. ALEXANDER ROSS	64
THE MOST EXPERT SWORDSMAN IN THE NAVY ... ... Illustrated with Photographs.	J. J. BENNETT	71
COLLABORATION. A Complete Story ... ... Illustrated by J. Gillingwater.	...E. A. SMITH	75
THE HOME OF SANTA CLAUS. A Serial Story for Children ... ... Illustrated with Photographs.	GEORGE A. BEST	79
OUR STEREOSCOPIC GALLERY ... ... Illustrated with Stereoscopic Slides.		85
THE REVENGE OF CHIEF WARDER LANGTON ... ... Illustrated by Montagu Barstow.	VICTOR L. WHITECHURCH	89
PICTURE PREACHING ... ... Illustrated with Photographs.	C. MONTGOMERY M'GOVERN	94

The Editor will always be ready to consider contributions, whether literary or pictorial, and, where stamps are enclosed, will make every endeavour to ensure their safe return in the event of their proving unsuitable, although he cannot hold himself responsible for any MSS. or drawings or photographs sent on approval.

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IN CÆSAR'S PALACE.

CHAPTER I.

"MILORD MIDDLESBOROUGH est un bon garçon, mais c'est dommage qu'il trouve le monde si ennuyant," said the pretty Countess de Chevilhac as she leant over the parapet of the terrace of Middlesborough's villa, and dropped a rose into the clear waters of the Mediterranean below.

"If at the advanced age of thirty-two, one has reduced oneself by one's own exertions to the condition of the Great Alexander, one should not complain if the world one has subjugated *does* prove a little wearisome," replied her companion, the witty Duc de Rheims. "Middlesborough is like a child surfeited with sweetmeats; he has tired of his *pralines* and his *nougat*, and he would give anything for a new sensation."

"He is altogether annoying," the lady added, and as she said it she gave a vicious little tug at the petals of the rose she held in her hand. "Nothing interests him, nothing amuses him. He will lose fifty thousand francs at roulette with the same expression on his face that it wears when he orders his carriage. On the day that he won the Grand Prix, nobody could tell whether he was pleased or annoyed at his success. The other afternoon, when we were caught in that terrible storm off Cape Camarat, and thought the yacht must inevitably founder, he was barely interested. It was a bore, no doubt, but it couldn't be helped. If we had gone to the bottom, he would doubtless have made his adieu beneath the waves with a cigarette in his mouth, and the same expression of gentle resignation upon his face that always makes me long to shake him."

"You must admit, however, that he is at least thorough in his failing," said her companion. "While some men affect it, Middlesborough's *ennui* is quite genuine. Did you ever hear what that dainty little American dancer, who took all Paris by storm last year, said of him? I think she put the case better than any one else has done. 'Lord Middlesborough,' said she, speaking with that indescribable accent of her country, 'from what I've seen of you, I reckon you're just fairly tired of livin'; and yet you haven't enough "*get up and get*" about you to go and kill yourself. You've got the dibs—why don't you pay a hired man to put you out of your misery.'"

"I have not heard that story before," the other replied. "And pray, what did our friend answer?"

"He smiled sweetly upon her, as he always does, and told her that he had no doubt the suggestion was an excellent one in every way; but, so far as he was concerned, it was unfortunately impracticable, for the simple reason that he could not muster up sufficient

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enthusiasm for dying, to go in search of the necessary man."

"That is so like him. Oh dear! what a dreary world it must be when one has outlived one's enthusiasm! How much more pleasant is it to be like De Trailles, who is eighty, and has not yet outgrown his boyish love for rice pudding. But, see! here is the man himself, coming down the path. We have been talking of you, Lord Middlesborough, for the last fifteen minutes."

The individual addressed bowed gracefully. He was tall, possibly an inch and a half above six feet, and very graceful.

"In that case, it is my duty, as your host, to offer you my apologies for a very uninteresting quarter of an hour," he answered, as he seated himself on the balustrading. "I trust, however, that I have had the good fortune to secure you for my champion?"

"Permit me to restore you this," he said.

The lady laughed musically. She was quite one of the prettiest women in Europe, and she had the advantage of knowing that he was aware of the fact.

"You would never forgive me," she said, "if you could have heard how I have been abusing you. The Duke and I have come to the conclusion that you resemble Alexander the Great."

"Alexander the Great! Good gracious! How so?"

"For the reason, that the Duke thinks you sigh because you have no more worlds to conquer."

"What a charming idea!" he said. "I fear, however, that you pay me too high a compliment. The positions should be reversed. I sigh, not for the reason that I have no more worlds to conquer, but because the world has conquered me. Edison, or some other man, should really invent a new universe in which everything would be different."

"That is a delightful idea!" said the Duke. "A new world in which everything would be different. Pray tell us with whom you would people it?"

Middlesborough smoked thoughtfully for a moment before he answered.

"The election would, of course, be by ballot, after the fashion of the clubs," he replied. "Equally, of course, there would be no politicians, or, at least, only the nice

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ones, and they would have to leave their politics behind them upon election. There would be no money; in consequence, no moneyed men; and, above all, there would be no match-making mammas, and for the reason that there would be no marrying or giving in marriage."

The Countess made a little *moue* as she put the question:

"Then there would be no loving?"

"Of course," Middlesborough replied with decision. "That is the one essential to the success of my scheme. Everyone would love in the most intricate fashion possible."

"Your world would be too charming," the Countess replied. "I hope you will make it a stipulation that I am to be admitted. Like the monks of Medmenham, you will have to inscribe over your portals, '*Fay ce que vou dras.*'"

"Scarcely," said Middlesborough; "for to be compelled to do only as one pleased would imply the existence of a restraining hand, or, at any rate, of a dominating influence; neither would be permitted in my world. But while we are arranging these details, I am forgetting the commonplace motive of my presence here. Nina Larrandale and the others are anxious to drive into the Casino to-night. Countess, will you permit me to be your charioteer? You will accompany us, of course, Duke?"

Both expressed their delight, and they accordingly returned together to the house. A shudder ran through Middlesborough as he thought of the hot rooms of the Casino, and the struggling mass of humanity he would meet at the tables. He would far rather have spent the evening wandering amongst the orange groves, whispering soft nothings into the pretty, shell-like ear of the Countess de Chevilhac. However, he was their host, and if his guests chose to amuse themselves in this way, he could only consent. Accordingly he climbed to the box of his coach, helped Madame de Chevilhac to a seat beside him, and tooled his party into Monte Carlo with the workmanlike skill that had given him the reputation of being one of the best whips in Europe.

However sad it may be to have to confess such a thing, it must be admitted that his friends, when they had discussed him upon the terrace that afternoon, had not maligned him.

Evelyn Charles Devereux-Ducie, seventeenth Baron Middlesbrough, was one of Fortune's chief favourites. Born to the inheritance of an old and honoured name, immense wealth, and a singularly handsome person, it would seem that the gods had done all in their power to make his path smooth through life. And yet the very advantages they granted him were destined ultimately to prove his chief affliction. At Eton and Christchurch he had been immensely popular; he left both institutions, however, without achieving the reputation of a worker. He excelled in every branch of athletics, yet when the annual University Sports came round his name was invariably absent from the list of competitors. He was offered an oar in the dark blue boat, but declined it for the reason that he had suddenly lost all interest in matters aquatic. On attaining his majority, he took his seat in the House of Lords, where he made an excellent impression, and it was supposed by some of his father's old friends that he might, in course of time, develop into a power. Unfortunately for their hopes, however, he tired of politics as he tired of everything else, and by the time he was twenty-six, he was scarcely to be seen in the House at all. He was a finished and fearless horseman, and for three seasons in succession he hunted the family pack. He collected a big stud at Newmarket, and backed his horses to an extent that caused the grey beards to wag their heads and prophesy that even his wealth would not bear the strain for long.

Then one day he found he was tired of hunting and racing; his horses and hounds were accordingly advertised for sale, and he himself departed on a yachting cruise round the world. The circumference of the globe was not attained, however, for, by the time they reached Japan, he was weary of the sea. The yacht's head was accordingly turned, and, within an hour of arriving at this decision, he was on his way to South Africa, where he proposed to devote a year to shooting big game. Eventually he reached England, looking very brown and well, but, if possible, even less interested in the world and its affairs than he had been when he first set out.

To do him justice, it was not because he was lazy, or that he in any way despised or fancied himself better than his neighbours; it was only an inability to continue to enjoy amusement when the first novelty had worn off. An attachment to a hobby is often endangered by the lack of means to indulge it to its full. With almost unlimited wealth at his command, Middlesborough was able to commence where others, less favoured, were perforce compelled to leave off. It is

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possible, and more than probable, since his constitution possessed a considerable amount of obstinacy, that, had he more difficulties to contend with, he would not have tired of each amusement so quickly. Even deer stalking —to quote a certain well-known writer— would pall as an amusement, if one could shoot a royal every five minutes throughout the day. The world that criticised him so freely was apt to forget this, when it said that Lord Middlesborough "was as unstable as the wind, and as changeable as the shadows of an April day."

Middlesborough had been entertaining a large house party for upwards of a fortnight, and this was the last day of their stay. On the morrow the Countess de Chevilhac was to go on to visit certain friends at Bordighera; De Trailles would travel as far as Rome, where he had an audience with the Holy Father; Anstruther and his pretty wife were returning to the fogs of England, while the Duke de Rheims and Middlesborough intended making their way to Paris in search of such amusements as the gay city could discover for them. After that, the villa overlooking the blue Mediterranean would be given over to the hands of caretakers, and it might be months, or even years, before it would see its master again.

The play that evening at the Casino was of the usual description. Middlesborough began by winning and ended by losing. At last, having found no satisfaction in it, he rose from the table and resigned his chair to the the man who, up to that moment, had been waiting patiently behind him. He discovered that he had only followed the example of De Rheims, who was now standing at some little distance, watching the players.

"So you have tired of it," said the latter, as his host joined him. "The room is stifling; let us come and smoke in the gardens. What people can see in that sort of thing passes my comprehension."

At the door their progress was delayed by the entrance of a small crowd of people. Middlesborough was thinking about something else, and did not give very much attention to them, but when they had passed he noticed that a lady, who, accompanied by a gentleman, had been the last to enter, had dropped one of the gloves she had been taking off. He picked it up and followed her.

"Permit me to restore you this," he said in French when he reached her.

She took the glove, and as she did so, looked up at him. Middlesborough saw a pale, sweet face, with large and serious eyes. She thanked him for his kindness, and then, with a bow, passed on.

"Surely she is not going to play like the rest," he said to himself, as he watched the retreating form. "She looks better fitted for the Sacred Heart than for the Casino. I wonder who she can be?" In his life he had seen many beautiful women—more, perhaps, than he could remember, but he did not know that he had ever seen a face, the memory of which haunted him as did this one. And yet, if the truth must be told, it was not altogether beautiful. The mouth was a little too large, the forehead a trifle too high, for it to have found merit in the eyes of many connoisseurs. He rejoined his friend and passed into the cool outside. A moment later De Rheims was accosted by a man who was about to enter the building. They stopped for a few moments, while Middlesborough continued his walk down the path. When his companion joined him again, there was an air of excitement about him that had not been there a few minutes before.

"My dear fellow," he said, "we are certainly in luck's way. Do you know that Madame d'Espère is at Monte Carlo?"

Middlesborough smiled at his friend's excitement.

"*Cher ami*," he said, "I can safely assure you that I did not know it, and for the very simple reason that I have never heard of Madame d'Espère before. Who is she? Pray enlighten me."

"She is Madame d'Espère," his companion replied, "and when you've said that you've said everything. I had forgotten for the moment that it was possible you might not know her. When a man voluntarily goes off to the end of the earth and remains there for years at a time, he must not blame anyone if he discovers on his return that new people have come to the front, new beauties dawned upon the world, and that So-and-so, who was probably starving in a garret when he left, is now one of the most sought after people in Europe."

"I am to understand then that Madame d'Espère is a celebrity?" replied the other. "I am afraid I am rather tired of celebrities. May I inquire what is her particular claim to notoriety?

"She has a hundred claims," De Rheims answered enthusiastically. "But if you like you shall judge for yourself. I am sufficiently acquainted with her to be able to introduce you to her presence, if you would care to accompany me. Her villa is only a short distance from here, and our friends will not

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be looking for us for another couple of hours at least. What have you to say to my proposal?"

"That it is an admirable one, in every way," Middlesborough replied. "By all means introduce me to this wonderful creature who has the good fortune to interest you so strongly. Are you quite sure, however, that you would not prefer to go alone? If so, do not hesitate to say so. I have no desire to be *de trop*."

"You need have no fear on that score," said the Duke. "I shall be only too glad to take you with me. We have often spoken of you, and I promised her I would take the first opportunity of making you known to her. As you can see for yourself that opportunity has now occurred."

With that they passed out of the grounds of the Casino, and made their way in the direction that the Duke had indicated.

"*Facile descensus Averni*," says the old Latin proverb, but easier still is the road that leads to danger. In something less than ten minutes after they had left the Casino, Middlesborough found himself following his companion into the drawing room of Madame d'Espère's villa. It was a finely proportioned room, and, at the moment of their entrance, contained at least a dozen people who were scattered here and there in little groups. On hearing the names of her visitors, their hostess, who had been seated beside a well known French diplomat at the further end of the room, rose and came forward to greet them.

"It is indeed kind of you to come and see me," she said to De Rheims.

"Monsieur de St. Bérin was telling me less than five minutes ago that you were in Monaco," she said to De Rheims, as she shook hands with him. "It is indeed kind of you to come and see me, and particularly to bring Lord Middlesborough with you."

She seated herself in a comfortable chair, and signed to the two men to follow her example. Of one thing there could be no sort of doubt; she was an extremely beautiful woman. She possessed a face that might have changed the destiny of a Cæsar, have subjugated an Anthony, or caused a Paris to break the bonds of hospitality. That she possessed the power of catering for the intellectual, while she challenged physical admiration, was evidenced by the characters and professions of the men about her. In one corner was Prince Gologoffski, whose communistic tendencies had brought him into trouble with his own Government, and had been the means of driving him into exile; talking to him was Herr Volker, the no less famous German scientist; while, on the further side of the room, conversing with a French military attaché, was a well known English financier, and a famous member of the Austrian Bar.

Most of these present were more or less well known to Middlesborough, and, remembering this fact, he marvelled that he had never heard from them of the woman beside whom he was seated.

"You are a great traveller, Lord Middlesborough, I believe," said Madame d'Espère.

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"Did I not tell you," she said, "that you carry your fate in your face?"

"I have been told that you know the world as we know the *Champs Elysées*. How pleasant it must be to feel that you have conquered all the barriers of Distance, that you have only to give your orders in order to be transported from Paris to Pekin, or Vienna, or Fiji, without trouble or inconvenience to yourself. Is it your intention to remain in Europe very long?"

"My friends would tell you that I seldom remain anywhere very long," Middlesborough replied.

"I am afraid you have been too long away from Paris. The Duke here is inconsolable if he is absent for more than a month from his beloved Boulevards. Are you not, Monsieur," she added, turning to De Rheims.

"Only since I have known you, Madame," the other replied, with a bow.

She tapped his arm playfully with her fan.

"I thought it was one of our strictest rules never to pay compliments," she said.

Compliment or no compliment, it seemed to Middlesborough that there was another meaning underlying De Rheims speech. In days to come, that meaning was destined to be only too clear to him. For the present, however, he was too much in the dark concerning her present life and antecedents to venture upon even a conjecture. For want of something better to say, he remarked that he had never seen her at the Casino.

"I never gamble," she answered. "At least not in that way. You may scarcely think it, but I have the most abject horror of losing money. When I tell you that five years ago I was an unknown woman, penniless and starving, that to-day I am rich, and in consequence have many so-called friends, you will perhaps be able to understand it. I owe it all to the fact that I have hoarded every *sou* I could scrape together. I believe, if I were tempted, there is scarcely anything I would not do for money. Where other people want fame, honour, and advancement, I want only wealth—to have the knowledge always with me that I shall never again be as I once was." She spoke with a sincerity that left no mistake as to her words. While she had been speaking, De Rheims had risen and crossed the room to speak to Gologoffski, leaving them alone together.

Middlesborough could not deny to himself that he was supremely interested in his companion. He noticed the beautiful poise of her head, her wealth of hair, the colour of her skin, and the exquisite moulding of her hands. Her voice was full and musical, and her eyes had the peculiar faculty of being able to retain attention after once it had been aroused. That she was accomplished above the average standard of her sex was a fact of which there could be no doubt, but it struck Middlesborough that there was something more behind it all than he could at present understand. While he was talking to her it

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seemed to him that he was under a spell —that he was being influenced by a will stronger than his own.

She had been silent for a moment. When she spoke again her voice had changed a little. There was a shade of awe in it which he knew could not have been of him.

"Has it ever struck you, Lord Middlesborough, that you carry your fate in your face?" she asked abruptly.

"Do we not all do so?" he inquired, with a smile. "It is an accepted fact, is it not, that you may read a man's character in his face? If his character, why not his fate, since the one is in a great measure dependent on the other?"

"Yes," she replied gravely, as if she were pondering over what he had said, "but how few there are who can see it. Do you believe it is possible for us to foretell the future?"

"If you mean by palmistry, necromancy, or the wheel of life," Middlesborough replied, "I must confess I do not."

"And yet I almost think you should," she answered, "for if I am not mistaken, you were afforded an illustration once that should have served to teach you that there is something more in it than meets the eye."

Middlesborough started. It was quite true, but how did she know it? "I am afraid I do not quite understand," he said. "To what do you refer?"

"You were travelling in India at the time," she said. "You had with you a friend, who was young and high spirited. At the termination of your visit to the Viceroy in Calcutta, you were to go up country, where you were to be entertained by a native prince. Before leaving you showed a kindness to a poor Fakir, who, in return, bade you warn your friend that if he left the Capital he would be dead within a week. You laughed at the notion, and resolved on no account to tell your companion, for fear it might make him nervous, and he might decline to go. What was the result?"

By this time Middlesborough's suspicion had vanished and he was genuinely moved. He could well recollect the horror of that time. "Your friend died of cholera in a tent by the roadside before you reached your destination," she continued, still looking straight at him and speaking in a voice that was little above a whisper.

Middlesborough could not repress a shudder. What she told him was exactly what had happened. Every detail was correct. All things considered, it was, perhaps, the most grizzly secret of his life, and the one he least liked to remember. Over and over again he had told himself that there could not possibly have been anything in the fakir's warning. Yet how terribly true it had proved to be! But how had Madame d'Espère become aware of it? he asked himself. He had been alone at the time he had received the warning, the fakir was a wandering Hindoo, who could not possibly have seen or dreamt of this beautiful Parisienne. To Middlesborough himself it had been a memory too painful for him ever to have spoken about to anyone. How, therefore she could have become acquainted with it was a mystery he could not solve. He tried to question her upon the subject, but she only shook her head.

"Did I not tell you," she said, "that you carry your fate in your face?"

"You did certainly say so," Middlesborough answered, "but you did not add that I carry the fates of my friends there also."

"Then I was right in what I told you?" she continued. "I am glad of that."

She said this as if she attached far greater importance to it than he could understand.

"I wonder if you would believe Lord Middlesborough," she said, even more seriously than she had yet spoken, "that it is fate that has brought you to me to-night. When I left Paris, a few days ago, I felt quite convinced in my own mind that it was to advance another step towards the completion of my destiny. You may think I am talking in a very strange way, at our first meeting, when I say that I firmly believe that our two lives, and that of one other person are inextricably interwoven. You smile, but believe me it is so. Do not jest about it for pity's sake! You little know what may be before you. The Past is our own to deal with as we please, the Future is a great and awful Mystery."

Middlesborough saw that this was no acting; she was really affected. Whatever her manner may have been before, it was quite certain that it was all seriousness now. For a moment he could have sworn that she trembled; then, with an effort, she pulled herself together, and her composure came back to her.

"Forgive me," she said in a different voice. "How absurd I am! We have, all of us, our little failings, and I had forgotten for a moment that this was our first meeting. You will think me a hysterical school-girl."

At this moment De Rheims crossed the room to them. Middlesborough took this as

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a signal that the other thought it was time they made their adieux. He accordingly rose from his chair. When he spoke, De Rheims noticed that there was a significant change in their manner towards each other.

"You are returning to Paris to-morrow, I near," she said after Middlesborough had bade her goodbye. "I hope, if I have not frightened you too much to night, that you will come and see me there. Monsieur De Rheims will be able to tell you where I live."

Middlesborough expressed the pleasure it would give him to do so, and then followed his friend out of the room. He had not been in the house half an hour, and yet it seemed to him as if he had known Madame d'Espère for a lifetime.

"Now that you have seen her, how did Madame strike you?" the Duke inquired, as they passed down the street in the direction of the Casino.

"She is certainly a very beautiful woman," said Middlesborough. But I must confess I don't know what to think of her."

"Nobody ever does," his companion replied. "She is, perhaps, the greatest enigma of the day. She did not happen to tell you anything about your past, I suppose? Any circumstance that you thought was known only to yourself?"

"She did! She described an incident to me of which I am prepared to swear I have never spoken to any living soul. It made me feel quite superstitious for a moment. I wonder how she does it."

"The strange part of it is," the Duke continued, without answering his companion's question, "that she affects everyone in a different way. Do you remember little Pontevecchi?"

"Perfectly," Middlesborough replied. "What about him?"

"As a rule he is a self-contained fellow enough, but when he was introduced to her, he acted like a madman. You cannot imagine how he behaved. He became almost hysterical, raved like a lunatic, vowed that she had the Evil Eye, and that it was death for any man to remain in her presence. There was quite a scene, and the man who brought him into her house, had to get him away as soon as possible. Nothing would induce him to go back again. I can well remember my own sensations when I was introduced to her. It was in Naples, and I had been yachting with Perrambino. As we entered the harbour, he turned to me and said: 'Mark my words, Madame d'Espère is here.' Like you, I inquired who the lady in question might be. He answered that she was a new comet in the firmament of Europe, and that she had an extraordinary influence over men. So enthusiastic was he in his praise of her, that I made him promise that he would introduce me to her as soon as we got in. It was not until we did get in, and found that she had only arrived that afternoon, that I inquired how it was he had been so certain that she was in the city. We had been yachting for a fortnight before, and I did not see how he could have become aware of the fact.

"'I cannot say how I knew it,' was his reply. 'I felt it, that is all. If she were in Paris or Vienna, and I arrived in either city, I should know it just as well. Think what you please, you can only admit that in this instance I was right.'

"Paul Delvitto says that when he is with her he always feels as if he must tell her all his secrets, good, bad, and indifferent. For her sake, as well as his own, I hope he does not."

"And how does she affect you?" Middlesborough inquired.

"Very happily," the other replied. "When I am with her I feel conscious of a pleasant exhilaration. She affects me like a rare vintage of champagne, that is all."

"Do you know where she hails from? What countrywoman is she?"

"That is a question nobody but herself can answer, De Rheims replied. "She is a mystery. She appeared first in Vienna, I believe, but she is neither an Austrian nor a Hungarian. Then she went on to St. Petersburg, where they believe her to be a Russian, afterwards Paris, where they feel sure she is French."

"Is she wealthy?"

"That is another question I cannot answer," said the Duke. "The villa she is occupying here belongs to Max Durrer; but in Paris she keeps an excellent establishment. When I tell you that Guillaume Péris is her chef, you will understand that she does not do things by halves. Her dinners are delightful, and the nicest men in Paris are to be met at her receptions."

"She is certainly very interesting," said Middlesborough, "and, in the present state of society, a woman who is that is a *rara avis*. When she returns to Paris I shall hope to see something more of her."

The Duke looked at him sharply.

"I wonder if it would be wise?" he said to himself as they turned in at the gates and

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made their way up the path towards the Casino, but why it was he wondered he did not say.

They entered the rooms just in time to discover their friends leaving the tables. They had all lost, so the pretty Countess de Chevilhac informed Middlesborough, and in consequence they were quite ready, if not eager, to go home. "There never had been such luck," the Countess declared. "People were winning all round her, but court as she would, the Sun of Fortune would not smile upon her."

"I'll never play roulette again," she cried angrily. "It's an odious game, and I'm bored to death by it."

She had recovered her spirits, however, when they reached the villa once more, and sat down to the charming little supper which Middlesborough's admirable Georges had prepared for them. Only one thing was wanting. Try how he would to rouse himself, their host could not fall into line with them. His introduction to Madame d'Espère had exercised a greater effect upon him than he had at first supposed. He found himself continually recalling his conversation with her, and the oftener he did so, the further removed he was from understanding it. What had she meant when she had said that their destinies were entwined with those of another person? Feeling as he did, even the animated chatter of Madame de Chevilhac—who, while being a great lady, possessed a tongue as sharp as a *grisette* — seemed distasteful to him. He wanted to be alone, to think.

When his guests, tired after their evening's play, bade him good-night and departed to their respective bed-rooms, he lit a cigar and went out for a stroll in the garden. Eventually he found himself standing on the terrace overlooking the sea, at the spot where he had discovered the Countess de Chevilhac and De Rheims that afternoon. The ripple of the waves below him, and the rustling of the wind in the shrubs behind him, was infinitely soothing. He could not remember ever in his life having felt as he did then. How was it that this woman had so suddenly fascinated him? He had known many more beautiful women than she, to whom he had not given a second thought. When he had smoked his first cigar, he lit another, and as soon as that was finished returned to the house, where he bade his man get him to bed as quickly as possible.

He had scarcely closed his eyes before he was asleep. Then he began to dream, and it was a curious phantasy that his brain conjured up for him. He seemed to be alone in a wild and deserted country that was like no other he had ever seen. If he had had a path he had lost it, and was now stumbling amongst rock and morasses in constant peril of his life. At every turn some fresh danger menaced him, and he was giving up all hope of ever reaching safety again, when, far ahead, twinkling like two stars, a pair of lights appeared. One was faint, but persistent in its advance; the other was bright, but moved with Will o' the Wisp gyrations, now luring him this way, now that, but always dazzling in its brilliance. Which should he believe in? At first he followed the brighter, but it only led him into greater danger than before. Still, however, the other light burnt steadily but dimly

A cry of astonishment escaped him. It was the face of the woman whose glove he had picked up that evening!

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on. Discarding the one he had hitherto been following, he quickened his pace towards the other. Guided by it, he passed from the treacherous pitfalls, and between the sharp rocks, up to a place of safety. Little by little the way grew plainer, until at last, wearied but unharmed, he stood in the fair country on the other side. Then, as he sat down, it seemed that the lights which had guided him came closer, and grew gradually larger until they took upon themselves the semblance of human faces. He looked at the one he had likened to a Will 'o the Wisp, and to his surprise discovered that it was the face of the woman he had met for the first time that evening—Madame d' Espère. She had lured him on to ruin, but the other had rescued him and helped him back to safety. Almost nervously he turned to examine the face of his saviour. A little cry of astonishment escaped him. *It was the face of the woman whose glove he had picked up that evening!*

(To be continued.)

THE HOUSE IN WHICH COLUMBUS DIED.

THE plain stuccoed house in which the great Columbus died still stands in a quiet street of Valladolid, and is one of the sights of the old-world city. Certainly the building cannot be commended for its beauty, the architecture being of the plainest and most modest character, as may be seen by our photograph.

Copyright Stereo Photo by Underwood and Underwood.

When the great navigator returned for the last time from the New World, he was broken in health and spirits, but loyal to his sovereign and country for whom he had run such great risks, and from whom he received so little real gratitude or appreciation. He was too ill to go to Court, but retired to his house at Valladolid, where after twelve months of suffering he died on May 20, 1506.

It was only after the great explorer had ceased to breathe that his stupendous work was really appreciated by the people of his adopted country. During his life he was ever an object of jealousy and petty spite, but no name is more honoured or revered in the whole of the Peninsula, or indeed, in the whole world. It is, alas! almost a truism that real greatness and worth have no other immediate reward than their own—and this is never very satisfactory.

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Photo by Lallie Garet-Charles.

THE ART OF THE CAMERA

By Roderick Grey.

Stereoscopes.

I am delighted to find that the idea of publishing stereoscopic slides has proved so splendid a success. I knew it would, for when once you have found out, as it were, how to use a stereoscope you can really appreciate the power of photography.

I wish living pictures could be done stereoscopically. Just imagine the delight of seeing the figures standing out in the manner they do when you are looking through a stereoscope.

I suppose it will be done. Every day brings something new and something marvellous by way of invention or discovery. There is so much, too, to be discovered in photography. It is not a matter of grubbing about in the dark. We know just exactly what we want; it is merely a question of being able to do it.

Photographic Wants.

I am not going to attempt to give a detailed catalogue of what we do want, nor shall I speak of the relative importance of the wants I may suggest. What a host of protests I should bring about me!

First of all we want colour-photography. "Done already!" I hear some of you exclaim. "Not a bit of it," I reply. I want colour photography of such a kind that I can put in a plate, or, better still, a film, and press a button, and then develope. And lo and behold! when I print there will be the colours just as the camera saw them.

"Utterly impossible," says the scientific gentleman, and I daresay he is right. It grieves me to think he is. It would be so nice, so marvellous to do as I suggest. The one great consolation that I have is that scientific gentlemen have often and often said that such and such a thing is impossible, only to find out subsequently that they are wrong.

Another Want.

I want the fastest lenses to be had at half the price one has at present to pay. I do not care whether they are made of

Photo by A. Ralston.

Home from the Market.

Google

Photo by C. F. Insted.

The Village Cobbler.

glass or what, but I want them much cheaper.

Then I want—but after all what good can come of complaining as to what I want. Far better be thankful for what I have. Goodness me! when I think of photography to-day and photography say twenty years ago, what a difference!

Not in results mark you, for some of the results obtained by the older photographers are ahead of the best productions of to-day, at any rate in the field of landscape. There are too many facilities now-a-days. Everything is too easy. The "press the button and we'll do the rest" idea has had a demoralising effect.

It is not easy to do anything really well. You must be prepared to give time and to expend an infinite amount of trouble and care. Sometimes almost by purest chance a novice turns out a fine picture. Notably he goes on wondering for years why he cannot repeat the operation. He could, perhaps, if only he really studied the art of photography.

I remember once seeing the representative of a sporting paper on a racecourse with a very fine camera. He was snapshooting starts and finishes and some of the jumping. I asked him if he often had failures, and he answered that he never had such a thing.

I quite believe him. He had had vast experience, and he knew every subtle device of snapshooting. Personally, I confess, I have no confidence of the results of snapshooting. But he was there as a matter of business to take those starts, etc., and take them he did.

Photographic Fiends.

Up to a certain point of excellence, everything is so easy that now anybody can go photographing. They do not all succeed—fortunately, perhaps. There is no doubt but that the injudicious and persistent photographer can be a dreadful nuisance. I once met a bad specimen on board ship. Really there was no getting away from the man. He was always on the alert, and always snapshooting you just when you did not want it.

It might be a rough day and the vessel might give a sudden lurch. It is just on such occasions that a man comes in useful. He can catch any unfortunate female and prevent her dashing her brains out against the bulwarks. Of course the attitude at the moment

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Photo by Lallie Garet-Charles.

MRS. BROWN-POTTER.

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Photo by F. Ollo.

The Milkmaid.

of catching is not exactly normal. Probably you have your arm round the lady's waist whilst she is clutching hold of you in the most vigorous fashion. The commotion is such that you do not hear a faint click just as things settle down once more to their ordinary condition, but you perceive the snapshootist winding off a film. As he looks up and catches your eye, he breaks into a broad grin as much as to say: "It's no use, I've got it. Wasn't it lucky? I just turned the corner in time and caught you.—I hope it will come out."

It is this class of creature that does so much harm to the fun of photography.

How to Mount Royal Magazine Slides.

By the bye, reverting to the subject of stereoscopic pictures, I have had a decidedly interesting letter from a correspondent who has found an excellent method of mounting the twelve stereoscopic pictures at the end of The Royal Magazine, and making twelve good slides out of them.

At first sight this seems impossible without buying two copies of the magazine Yet it is not. The two pictures which are printed back to back can actually be separated and mounted on cards. I give the process almost in the exact words of my correspondent:

Cut out your picture. Then glue one side carefully with clean glue, and lay it on a piece of muslin, taking care that every portion of it is sticking to the material. The muslin should be a couple of inches larger all round than the picture when cut out. Having pressed the picture evenly on to the muslin glue the other side of it, and place over it another piece of muslin, so that it forms a sort of muslin sandwich with the picture in the middle. Having carefully pressed the sandwich, lay it aside whilst the glue sets. When it has properly dried take your sandwich and grasp each piece of muslin with either hand and pull steadily. This is the most ticklish part of the operation. You must draw the two pieces asunder squarely and evenly.

As they part you will find that the paper on which the two pictures are printed is splitting, one half adhering to each piece of muslin.

When you have finally separated the pieces of muslin lay them in a dish of warm water, the picture side downwards, and leave them until at length the pictures float off. After cleaning them with a sponge they are ready for mounting on cardboard. "This done you will find," adds my correspondent, "that you have each month a dozen permanent pictures which you are not afraid of your friends handling."

And all for the price of threepence, with the rest of the magazine given in for nothing! Well, well!

Photo by F. Ollo.

Rounding the Curve.

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Photo by Lallie Garet-Charle[illegible].

POPPIES.

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Fix Focus Cameras.

THERE are few enough things in this world that can be done without trouble and care, and excellence is never attained without experience. I suppose I ought to add that, as a rule, one should be quite ready to buy one's experience, and rejoice if the price is not too great.

I am led to moralise thus by the fact that I have frequently discussed, with what I might call amateur amateurs, the subject of fixed focus hand-cameras, as distinct from those that require focussing.

I write require; although really I would rather use the expression that are capable of focussing: it comes to that, for there can be no question but that far better pictures can be obtained by using a focussing camera than one with a fixed focus.

Nevertheless, the latter is the simpler, and, naturally enough, the inexperienced individual who objects to using his or her brains can turn out more passable photos with it than with a camera that requires some judgment of distance and focussing.

With a fixed focus, taking a photo does literally and actually amount to nothing more than pressing a button, and leaving the camera to do the rest. Yet even then the better sort of fixed focus camera will ask a little intelligence in its use by having different stops. These stops are, as it were, a compensation for the absence of a focussing adjustment. A number of circumstances must be taken into account, and the proper stop used, if you wish to get a sharp, well-defined result.

The inexpensive fixed focus camera will give, no doubt, very good pictures, and the possessor will be happy enough until he or she comes across the work of a fellow amateur who uses a hand camera that can focus. If this latter is properly used, the results are unquestionably the better. At the same time, in the hands of the persistently incompetent, the necessity for focussing seems to preclude even an average good picture. Consequently, my advice to those

FROM A PHOTO

A Tamil Barber.

Google

Photo by W. Bunnette.

At Tea.

who wish to play at photography, and do nothing more than play at it, is to buy fixed focus cameras.

If, on the other hand, you are ready to learn, and are not going to be disheartened by many a failure at the outset, buy a hand camera that is capable of being focussed for various distances.

My Correspondents.

SOMETIMES my correspondents, of whom I have many, are critical. One gentleman, who had requested me to use my influence with the editor to get some of his photos published, was very wrathful when I told him they were not good enough. "You may be a decent fellow," he wrote, "but you know nothing about photography." True, true, my dear sir; like Socrates, I know nothing but that I know nothing. This is my only merit.

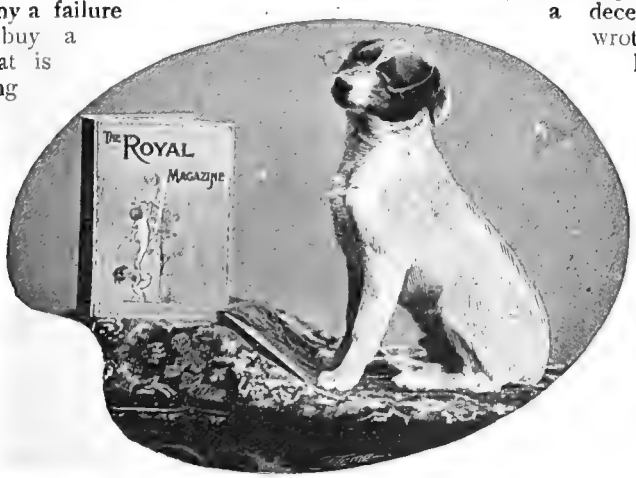

Photo by P. R. Valentine.

One of Our Readers.

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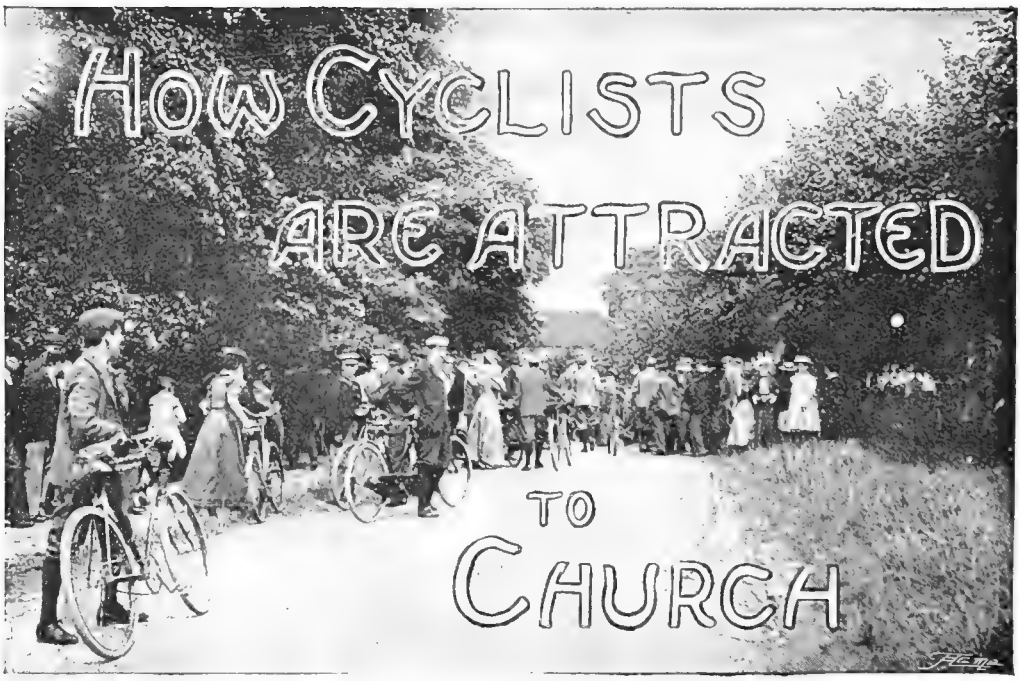

By Stanley White.

Photographs by C. Arthur Pearson Ltd.

Of late years, Sunday cycling at the expense of church attendance has become so general, that the clergy and pastors of all denominations have been under no little anxiety as to how to counteract the movement. The more advanced among them, however, now recognise that, in principle, Sunday cycling is a good thing; and, instead of trying to dissuade their flocks from indulgence in the healthful pastime, have set themselves to provide facilities so that cyclists may attend church. Many of the clergy are inviting wheelmen to come to service in their cyclist costumes, and some have gone so far as to furnish accommodation for the safe custody of machines while their owners are occupied in spiritual exercises within.

These are steps, and substantial ones, too, in the right direction, and few thinking people anticipate that the clergy will ever have cause to regret their action in meeting the needs of cyclists in a liberal spirit.

By far the most enterprising and original in his methods to attract cyclists to church is the Rev. Elwyn Lewis. Mr. Lewis is rector of the little parish of Fyfield, near Ongar.

Situated amidst beautiful surroundings, Fyfield, to all appearance, might be a hundred miles from town, yet it is within easy distance from Liverpool Street, and contiguous to the leafy glades of Epping.

Recently it was borne strongly into the mind of Mr. Lewis that some stronger attraction than any yet existing should be instituted to induce cyclists to come to church. Being fully alive to the unique advantages of his position in that he was within easy cycling distance of thousands of tired Londoners, he hit on a happy expedient.

He sent notices to the daily papers, inviting wheelmen to cycle over to Fyfield Church, for a service of half-an-hour's duration; to be followed by tea in the rectory grounds, at the nominal figure of *6d.* per head. The idea caught on like wildfire, for at the first gathering, which took place in the early part of the year, Mr. Lewis was, in common parlance, literally taken by storm.

About 800 cyclists of both sexes responded, and, although provision had been made on a substantial scale, Mr. Lewis found it necessary to send post-haste into the village for further supplies. The attractions which he has to offer are of the best. The rectory grounds are beautiful and extensive; in fact, an ideal place for a picnic. The rectory itself is a

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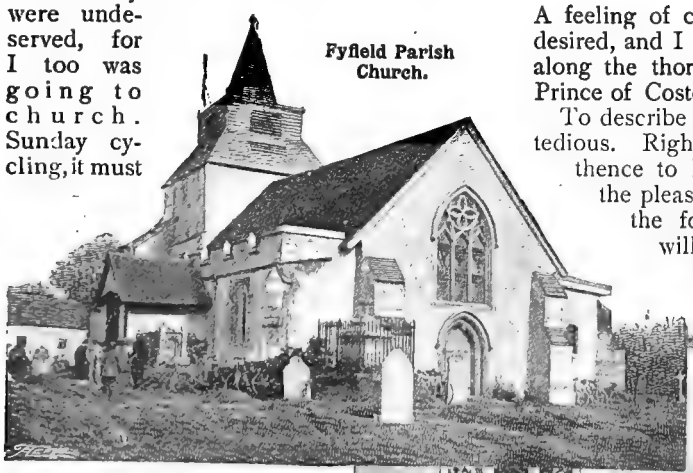
picturesque building, several hundred years old. Last, but not least, Mr. Lewis as a host is geniality itself.

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind," says an old proverb, and the reason of Mr. Lewis' kindly hospitality to cyclists is not far to seek. He is himself an ardent devotee of the wheel, and, indeed, an all-round sporting man—but more of that anon.

The second meeting was arranged for, but was spoiled by the rain. A considerable number cycled over, and took part in service at church, but the weather would not admit of tea in the open air. To compensate for this disappointment, Mr. Lewis issued a fresh set of invitations, and it was at this third gathering that I was privileged to be present. I found there were some among us who had come over fifty miles; I suppose I could not have done much less than thirty myself. Not being much of a scorcher, I decided to allow myself plenty of time, so started from Sydenham just as respectable suburbanites were wending their way to morning service. Of course, I came in for my share of the deprecating glances usually bestowed on the godless Sunday cyclist. But for once, at least, they were undeserved, for I too was going to church. Sunday cycling, it must be confessed, has always had its joys for me; but, as I spun over Sydenham Hill, I was conscious of a strange new pleasure, a peculiar zest, which I had never previously experienced. The wisest of men has it that "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant;" but we know his Epicurean creed led him to a bad end.

The Rev. E. Lewis Playing the Organ and Piano at the same time.



Fyfield Parish Church.

A feeling of conscious virtue is more to be desired, and I had it to perfection as I sailed along the thoroughfare immortalised by the Prince of Coster Singers.

To describe my journey in detail would be tedious. Right on through smoky Stratford, thence to Leytonstone, and, heigho! for the pleasant groves of Chigwell. Oh, the forest! Heaven and posterity will surely bless, as I do now, the enlightened body who have

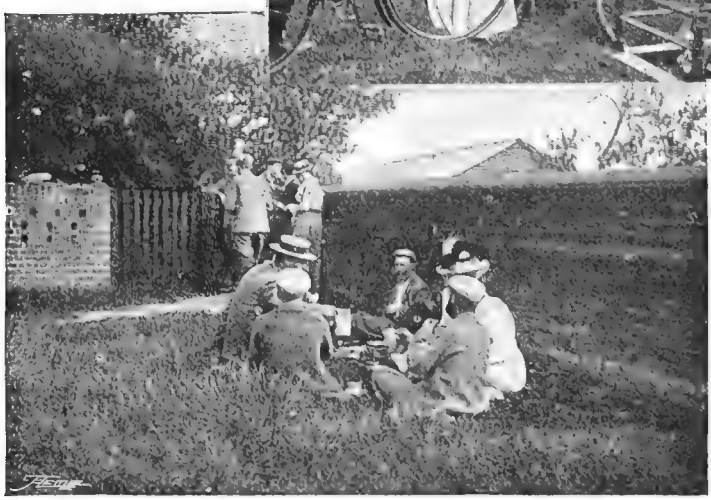
The Cyclists arriving at the Church.

Google

saved wood and glade from the ruthless hands of the spoiler. From thence to Fyfield I suppose that the run is some fifteen miles. I arrived at my destination in good time, so had leisure to note brothers, and yes, sisters, of the wheel as they poured in by the score. Mr. Lewis rode up on his bicycle shortly after my arrival. I need not give a word portrait of this gentleman, because an excellent photo of him appears with this article. He looks what he is, every inch a lover of the wheel.

By three o'clock, hundreds were outside waiting for admission to the service. Punctually at three o'clock the doors were thrown open and the visitors poured in, filling the little building to its utmost capacity.

After the Service.



One of the many groups of Cyclists taking tea in the Rectory Grounds.

The rector first offered up a prayer, and a hymn followed, sung in hearty style. Mr. Lewis promised that the sermon should not exceed five minutes, and he kept his word. The result was a triumph in the art of condensation. Rest, he said, did not mean laziness or sloth, but refreshment and change. He contended that cycling was a most sanitary exercise, and that people who lived a long way from church would be more likely to go to worship if they had bicycles than if they were without.

After the service, photographs were taken of groups outside the church by the ROYAL MAGAZINE photographer, which are here reproduced. They give a better idea of the happy gathering than any words of mine can do. The party, numbering some 400, then proceeded to the rectory grounds, which are quite near. On arrival at the gate they were confronted by the worthy rector, who proceeded to collect the tea tickets in a most business-like manner. Tea was in readiness. The fare consisted of tea, bread and butter, and cake *ad libitum*. The quantities disposed of may be gauged from the fact that over 40lbs. of cake alone were consumed.

The meal was quite *al fresco* in style. The company split up into groups, and enjoyed the good things provided in various shady spots. It was very evident that all were highly delighted with their surroundings, and will not require to be asked twice to pay another visit. Among other attractions, Mr. Lewis's peacocks came in for their share of notice and admiration; and the same may be said of the Newfoundland

Google

A Cyclist Mending a Puncture in the Churchyard.

dog, who fortunately was disposed to be friendly.

At the first gathering Mr. Lewis made no charge, but they are badly in want of a new organ at Fyfield, and the guests prefer to pay for what they have.

A few of the cyclists stayed for evening service, but the majority rode off an hour or so after tea with many expressions of good-will towards their kind entertainer.

The Rev. Elwyn Lewis is a man of many parts. One might search the country over, and yet not find another of his versatility in the ranks of the clergy. Divine, doctor of music, chess-player, cricketer, boating man, the list grows long, but does not exhaust the tale of his accomplishments. Not long ago, when enjoying the hospitality of Mr. Lewis, we spent a pleasant and amusing quarter of an hour in triplicating his pursuits under various letters of the alphabet, after this style, the three C's—cycling, cricket, and chess, etc., etc. But unfortunately my memory does not enable me to enumerate all, so will content myself by quoting a sample of the product of our joint ingenuity.

It is but a few short weeks since I had the pleasure of interviewing Mr. Lewis, and yet during that brief interval he has blossomed into a Doctor of Music. Those who know anything at all about musical examinations will be able to realise the amount of hard mental application required to take this much coveted, but rarely attained, degree.

As will be noticed by a unique photo specially taken for this article, Mr. Lewis is so much at home as a musical performer that he can play two instruments at once. In this instance he is sitting in his drawing-room at the rectory, and while with the right hand he is playing an air on the American organ, with the left he is putting in an accompaniment on the piano, a feat truly typical of his many-sided powers. If we except the precentors of cathedrals, Mr. Lewis is one of the very few clergymen who have attained eminence in music. Judging by his variety of gifts, he is a man who would succeed in almost any sphere of life. He has the rare faculty to diffuse his energies over many objects, and, at the same time he has retained the power of concentration which has rendered him pre-eminent in one.

The Rev. E. Lewis about to set out on a Trip through his Parish.

Google

MR. GUY BOOTHBY.

THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN OF DEATH."

Hullo! How are you? Come right in and have a rest.

Now we'll just go round. I am awfully proud of my horse.

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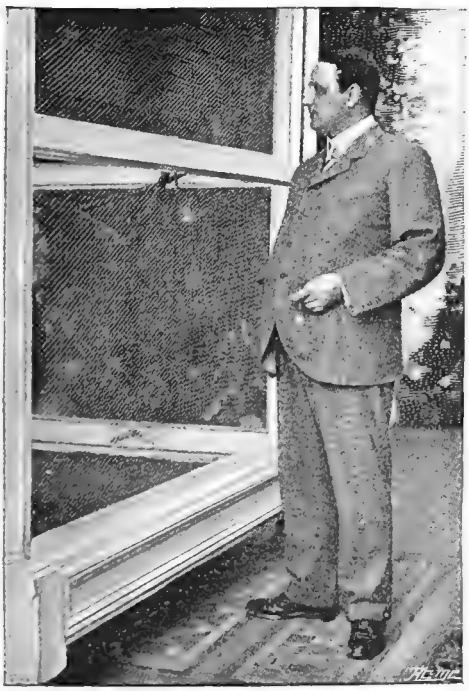
Here's another boon friend of mine. He's a champion greyhound.

Yes, rather! I am great on bull-dogs. How's this for a beauty? I've refused £200 for him.



Now for my feathered friends. Here's a collection for you! They come from all parts of the world.

A globe-trotter? Why, I tramped right across Australia and this was the only luggage I carried.

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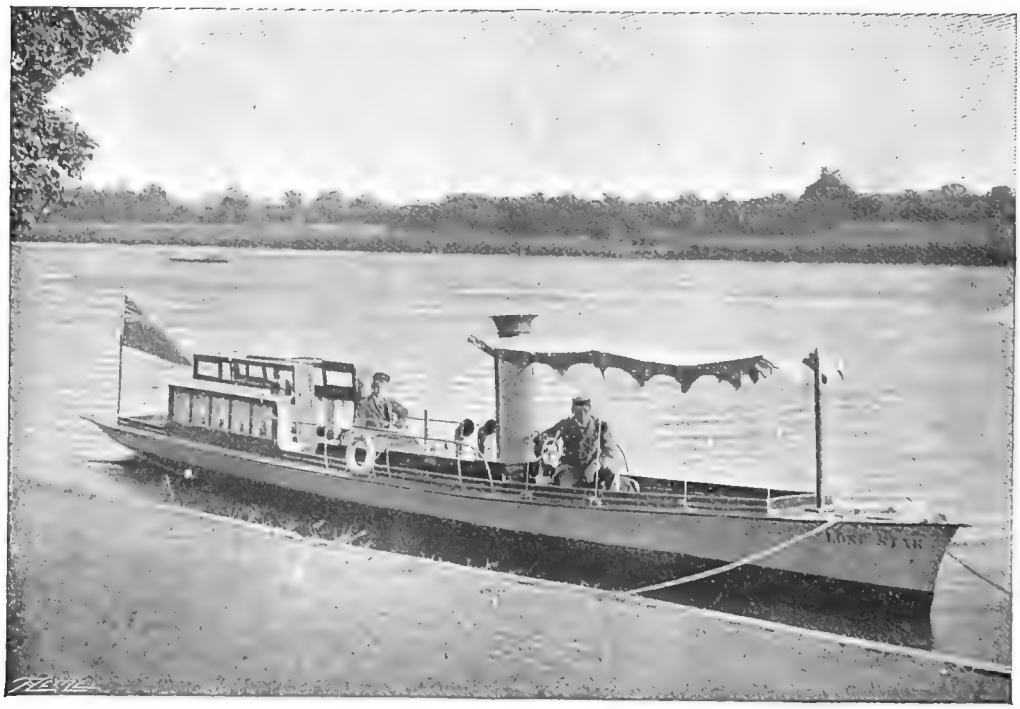
No, I am not an indoor man, but, of course, I am fond of billiards.

Ah! by the way, you must come and see my steam launch.



Isn't she a little beauty? Well, good-bye! I am off up the river.

From Snapshots taken at a special interview by C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd.

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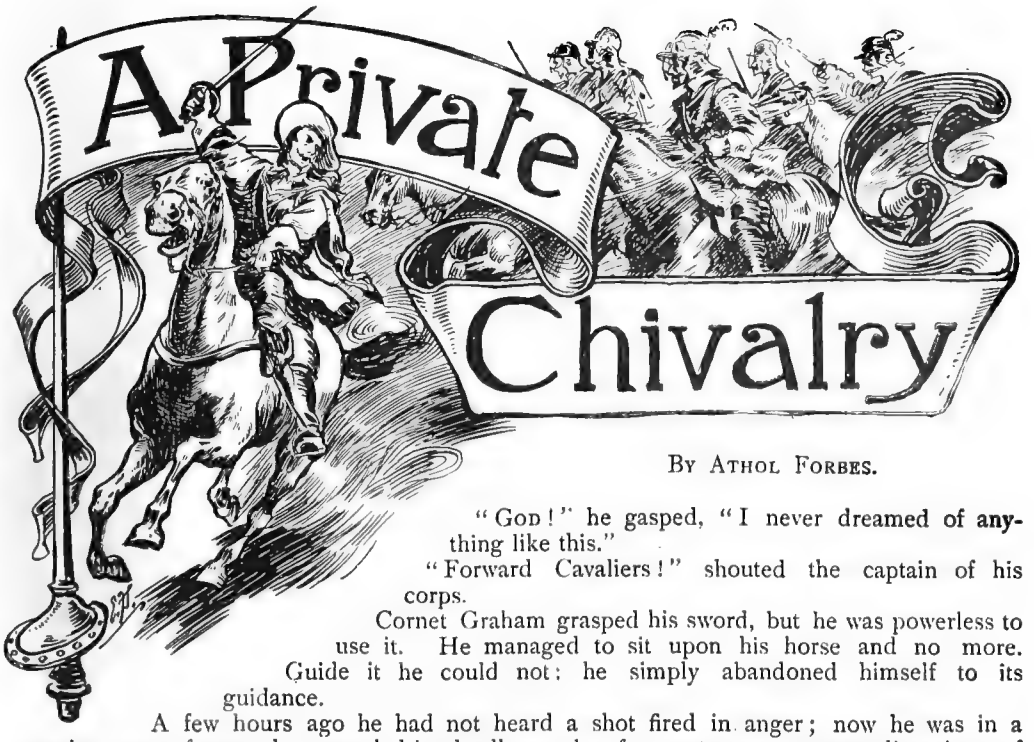

By Athol Forbes.

"God!" he gasped, "I never dreamed of anything like this."

"Forward Cavaliers!" shouted the captain of his corps.

Cornet Graham grasped his sword, but he was powerless to use it. He managed to sit upon his horse and no more. Guide it he could not: he simply abandoned himself to its guidance.

A few hours ago he had not heard a shot fired in anger; now he was in a surging mass of men who struggled in deadly combat for mastery; two contending rivers of steel seemed to be let loose, and a sound as of an Inferno pounded his brain and turned him dizzy.

"Forward Cavaliers," sang out the captain, and his followers responded with a roar. Blows fell with rending crash upon steel, dealt with desperate hateful vigour, horses reared their full height and uttered terrified cries, swords described great circles in the air and seemed to dart hither and thither like tongues of silver flame. Men and horses came tumbling down and lay quivering on the ground as pistols were discharged, and their opponents' steel rent their bodies almost asunder.

At times, he caught a glimpse of his captain towering above his fellows and slaying right and left like a demon, trampling down everything, riding like a madman. The fierce sun blazed down upon them, blinding in its glare and suffocating in its heat.

Then a sudden faintness came over him, and a mist floated before his eyes. The surging *melée* lost coherence and distinctness, and seemed a living shrieking whirlpool drawing him into its terrible depths. For a moment that seemed an eternity, his terror robbed him of the very instinct of self-preservation; his limbs lost their power, he was frozen, he was impotent. "My God! My God!" he gasped with unconscious lips, and fierce, distorted faces seemed to fill the air, and bodiless arms to strike at him as he rode. Then he saw himself lying stiff and dead, and those dreadful hoofs trampling his body out of recognition.

"Give the cropped hypocrites no quarter," sang out the captain, still urging forward and raining blows with lightning-like rapidity.

But the sword of Cornet Graham never moved; in spite of the sweating heat, he still felt as if he were frozen. For months he had craved for this very thing—to ride forth, as his fathers before him had done to fight for the King, and now, in the midst of this roar, for which he had longed, he could only gasp with ashy lips, "My God! My God!"

Suddenly a shot struck the man riding just in front of him, and a shudder passed through his frame when he caught sight of the dead man's upward-turned face as he galloped over his lifeless body.

It was the snapping of what nerve was left. He could only look wildly round for some

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avenue of escape. Here, among these bushes, was his chance. With a gesture of despair he rolled off his horse and lay panting but unhurt in the bush. He watched the fighting mass disappear in a cloud of smoke and dust, his own horse galloping behind.

"Thank God! Thank God!" he murmured, "I am out of that hell."

His lips were parched and his tongue like leather. He gnawed away at the grass for relief.

Let it be said in his favour, he was but sixteen years of age, and this was his first skirmish with the enemies of the King. Suddenly, and without a word of warning, with no special training, he was hurried into the thick of a hand-to-hand fight.

He lay exhausted and dazed. A long ride—seven hours in the saddle—had wearied him, and he sank into the arms of peaceful sleep; and in its serene softness, he had time to recover his balance.

When he had fallen asleep, the sun was well down in the sky; when he woke the birds were on the move, and it was just showing daylight in the eastern sky. A noisy cock wakened him by his shrill cries. For a moment he hardly knew where he was, and when he did, only by an effort could he recall how he had come there. Then a wakening nightmare of horror came over him as he thought of his cowardice, of his home, his mother, and the grand race of soldiers from which he had sprung. In rapid succession, these spectres passed before him and seemed to point at him with scornful indignation. The enormity of his crime and failure came upon him as a horrid night of darkness, and with a great cry of agony he buried his face in his hands and sobbed. Thus he lay for some hours.

* * * * *

"Has someone taken your doll?"

The young man raised his head and perceived that the question was asked by sweet-faced innocence of some three or four years.

"Has someone taken your doll?" she asked again in tones strongly suspicious of tears. "'Cos they have taken mine."

"Come hither, pretty one," he said, glad to hear a child's voice.

She advanced fearlessly towards him and poured out her grief. He stroked her hair and thought she resembled a sister at home, whom now he dare not face.

Naughty men had come; grandfather and grandmother were crying, and the naughty men would not let her have her doll—her own dolly. The naughty men were also pulling all grandfather's nice things about.

"And where is your father, sweet maid?"

"Oh, he has gone to fight."

Then the child burst into tears again, as the thoughts of the doll came into her mind.

"See, I will give you one of these nice

"Has someone taken your doll?" she asked.

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silver buttons from my coat," and he ripped one off and presented it.

But the child, who wanted her doll, would not be comforted with a button, and seemed to think that his request to dry her tears was, under such circumstances, a most unreasonable one. The young officer produced the contents of his pockets. No; she wanted the doll.

He concluded that a party of the opposite side were plundering some neighbouring house. Strange to say, the youth who had played the coward the day before was quite sober in his courage now. He had gone through a terrible ordeal, yet he knew a worse one was before him when an explanation would he demanded of his conduct; for he doubted not that the whole troop had witnessed his exhibition of cowardice. He buckled on his sword and set his teeth.

"Show me the men who have taken your doll!" he said to the child, and her reply was to put her hand in his and lead the way.

In an instant her tears were dried, and she was happy because her cavalier would punish the naughty men and rescue her treasure. She chatted all the way, and her innocent prattle comforted poor Graham.

The thought that one bit of humanity did not shun him, braced him up, and he was determined to have the doll, if he fought a dozen men for its possession.

They had not gone far before they descried in the distance a woman, who, on catching sight of the couple, ran towards them.

"There's mother," shouted the child. "Won't she be pleased."

"Marjory, where have you been?"

"Mother, this soldier will get me back my doll."

The woman dropped a curtsey as she saw the rank of the man who had brought back her child.

"Thank you, kind sir. She ran out when we were busy with the men, and we did not miss her till about half an hour ago;" and she nestled the child to her side. "We are full of trouble," she continued, "but grandfather will be pleased to see the little one."

"This kind gentleman will get me my doll; he promised," broke in the child.

"Hush! darling, you must not trouble him."

"Yes; we mean to have the doll. I will come to the house and interview these marauders," said Graham. "Are they the King's men or Cromwell's?" he asked.

"Neither, good sir. They are the sheriff's men. Our home is to be sold up. My husband has been away fighting in Cromwell's army. Grandfather fell and broke his leg, and we are penniless, for there has been no one to work the little farmstead but myself. Now Andrew Leggett has come down upon us for the rent."

"What, the Preacher?"

"Yes," replied the woman. "Put in by the Protector. 'Tis his house."

"I know the psalm-smiter well. Small mercy at his hands, I trow."

"Hold!" shouted young Graham. The men who were loading the cart paused.

"Put down that chair!" he said authoritatively to a man who was carrying this article of furniture.

"The doll! The doll!" shrieked the child, and she pointed to her toy, the head of which peeped out from a basket of odds ends.

"Pass that doll down!" he said to the man who was up on the cart.

"Who be you?" asked the man with a sour scowl. "We act by the sheriff's warrant."

"You will unload those things as quickly as you can, or I will hasten your work with this!" and he touched his sword. "How much is owing?"

To answer this question another man came out of the cottage.

"Near thirteen pounds one way and another," replied that worthy individual.

"How much has been put on as costs by the rogue Leggett?"

"That is our business, not yours," answered the man on the waggon."

Graham stepped up to the cart, swung himself up by the wheel, and pulled out the doll.

"Now, my men, no nonsense! Unload!"

"Not till we see the money," said the man, who appeared to be in charge.

"You shall have that," answered the officer.

"Who will pay?"

"Cromwell," said the young officer calmly, and he blushed as he remembered his well-filled purse, stowed away under his saddle. He entered the house and spoke a few cheering words to the old man, who now lay on the floor.

"Come Marjory, we will go and get the money," and young Graham and the little girl, who closely hugged her dolly, passed out.

Half an hour afterwards the officer and his little companion entered the camp of the army of the Protector. She repeated to the soldiers who challenged them what Cornet Graham dictated:

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"This is my prisoner, and I want my reward."

"Don't stand there laughing," he said to the man, who gave a great guffaw at so singular an announcement. "Conduct us to your captain."

The Roundhead officer was incredulous, and seemed inclined to regard it as a joke.

"The child discovered me. Pay the reward that is offered, and of your courtesy let some trustworthy man escort her to her home. If you doubt my word, examine these papers," and he drew from inside his vest some identifying documents.

"These are in order. I cannot doubt your statement longer, and the £25 shall be conveyed safely with this child to the parents."

Two soldiers appeared in obedience to a signal from their captain, and Cornet Graham was bidden to follow them. He kissed the child and left the tent.

Another period of misery! Not that he dreaded the prospect before him. Death would have been a relief. Gladly would he have welcomed the summons that would have put an end to his existence. His past cowardice dragged him down to the depths of despair and wrung his very soul.

About sunset a guard—a big, good-humoured looking fellow—brought him bread and a jug of water.

"Cromwell is come; so say thy prayers with extra care to-night, for thy life is not worth twenty-four hours' purchase. We got the worst of that brush with the King's men yesterday, and they say the Protector hath a sore head. 'Tis unfortunate, but 'tis war. 'Methinks I saw thee in the skirmish. Ah! well, good day to thee, and give my compliments to old Nick. I may never see him to do so my myself, but thou art sure of his acquaintance, if what our preachers say be true. Ha! Ha!"

"Pass that doll down," he said to the man who was up in the cart.

"Wast thou fighting for Cromwell yesterday?" asked Graham.

"I was in the fight yesterday. But I do not fight for Cromwell. I fight for my pay—for money. I am a soldier of fortune, and therefore I pity a soldier of misfortune. But good day; 'tis the way of war. Here comes the officer of the guard."

"Follow me," said that officer to the prisoner.

In a few moments he stood before the Protector. It was the first time he had seen Cromwell, and it was not without a certain nervousness that he gazed on his stern features.

"So you fling your life away for a doll, I understand? Is it then

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so worthless? No wonder men give their lives for Charles when that is the value they place upon them. Yet thou art young to die."

Cromwell stopped and watched the effect of his words, and for a few seconds there was a silence.

The colour had quite forsaken Graham's face, and his lips quivered. They both looked into each other's eyes — the great soldier and the young man; then Graham dropped his before the other's searching gaze.

"I am glad to die, sir," he replied in a voice scarcely above a whisper.

There was another moment's silence, Cromwell still fixing his eyes on the prisoner's face.

"Is life, then, so worthless?" he repeated.

"I had far sooner die, sir. I—I care not to live—I—" There was a lump in Graham's throat; his voice shook; he came to an abrupt pause, while a faint flush of embarrassment climbed into his pale cheeks.

"Leave us," said Cromwell to his guards.

"Oliver Cromwell, who now stands before thee, is not ashamed to own it."

Then he arose, and approaching the young man, he placed his hand on his shoulder. "Come, lad," he said kindly, "tell me thy grief, for thou hast suffered. Thy face tells the tale."

How wonderful is the power of a kind word, and especially when it comes from an unexpected quarter! The humiliating story that wild horses could scarcely have dragged from young Graham's lips found their way out falteringly, yet spontaneously, while the blood ebbed and flowed on the speaker's face. Twice he lifted up his eyes, only to let them drop the next instant.

And Cromwell listened to the recital, and as the young prisoner told all, a tear stole down the older man's furrowed cheek.

"So you see, sir," said Graham after all had been told, "it is far better that I should die. I am a coward. I have disgraced my name and my family. I have broken the oath that I swore—to give my last drop of blood in defence of my King. At the first skirmish I turned tail, and ran away."

"Thou art not the first, nor art thou the last, I reckon. Listen! Does any man doubt my courage?" said Cromwell sharply.

Young Graham smiled at the mere mention.

"But do you know, sir, whether any man has made a soldier after such weakness as mine?"

"Yes, I know one who in his first fight felt like thyself, and yet became a soldier."

"Who was he? Tell me?" asked the man eagerly.

"Oliver Cromwell, who now stands before thee, and is not ashamed to own it. Now go; thou art free, but on thy way call and see the old man at the cottage, and there is a maid there who would have word with thee. They have been here pleading for thy release, and have brought back the money. The maid offered to give her doll as the price of thy freedom."

But the young man stood still.

"What now?" demanded Cromwell.

"The furniture: the reward for my capture is to redeem it," he said, "I wish that to be done."

"That is provided for. The only thing missing from the house is the doll, which the wilful maid persisted in leaving with me, and which I will trouble thee to return. Perchance it might get mislaid, and I should not care to face the child with the responsibility of its loss upon my conscience."

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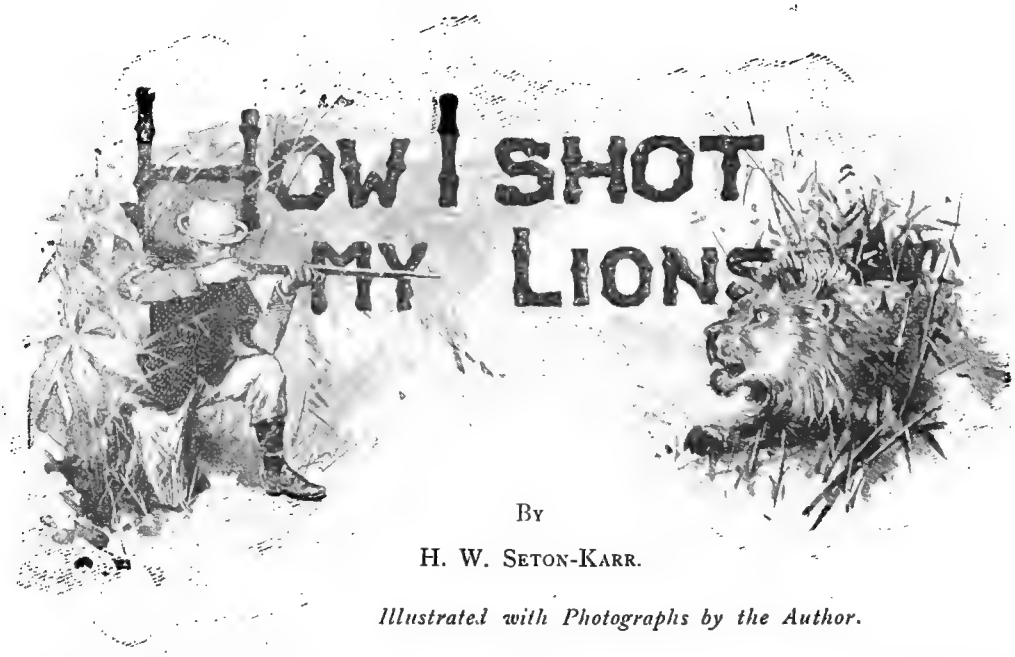

By

H. W. Seton-Karr.

Illustrated with Photographs by the Author.

During nine expeditions to the interior of Africa, carried out during the last seven years, from the most recent of which I have lately returned, I have always been glad to try conclusions with the king of beasts.

These are stirring times, and people like to hear stirring adventures.

I am glad to think that fact is more interesting than fiction to the majority of readers, because this is going to be a plain tale plainly told without any "de Rougemont" adornments, for I fear I lack both the desire and the imagination necessary to deviate one iota from actualities.

There are still plenty of lions in Africa and, I think, always will be; so that our descendants in future ages, when in want of a little real excitement, will be able to find it in this fiery continent—perhaps taking a trip for the purpose in a flying-machine.

The lion is difficult to see in grass or scrub, because his colour adapts itself to the surroundings; he is not actually afraid of man, but seems to dislike his presence and avoids him, unless annoyed, or at night, when he sometimes takes the offensive.

Mr. Seton-Karr at the Door of his Tent.

I have been blamed by certain faddists for killing animals during my expeditions; as a matter of fact, I have scarcely averaged two per week, and those for food; and I am unable to see that killing a wild animal during the excitement and perils of the chase is more to be condemned than the killing of domestic ones at home.

The lion in ages past may have served some good purpose in the scheme of creation by keeping down the too great increase of game. But the lion's useful vocation is now gone. He simply exists destructively albeit grandly.

I have seen the wild African lion on twelve occasions only; on eight of these I essayed to kill, and was successful on six, once or twice at the imminent peril of my life.

The first time I came across the fresh pug or track of a lion was near a well called Sattawa. I had a lot of trouble with the natives of my party to persuade them to build me a hiding-place where I could wait in ambush for the lion; but it was all in vain, the animal never came. This made me keener and more determined than

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ever, and I determined never to stop marching every day towards the far interior until I got definite news of the vicinity of *felis leo*.

The natives of Ogo told me my best chance was to wait about the pasturing grounds of those inland tribes of African gypsies. It took me eleven days steady going before I reached the place, but immediately I arrived I received news of a lion. Fortune favoured me at last, and some timely rain enabled me to fill up my depleted water-barrels. Here I camped and sent word of my arrival to the nomadic tribes. Round about a village, which had been evacuated by the people the day before, were footprints in the half-dried mud of a large lion or lioness. The fence which formed the zeriba was of thorn branches, piled to a height of ten feet, and over this, notwithstanding hurled fire-brands and general pandemonium, the lion had leaped into the densely-packed enclosure and killed a horse, whose remnants, half devoured by hyænas, lay scattered about, with the bloodstained remains of a bridle and other trappings.

The Wonderful Hall of Mr. Seton-Karr's House.

Early on the fourth morning after this, there arrived in the early dawn at my tent a native, old but active, to say that a lioness had just leaped into their village, a mile away, and had killed two sheep, one of which she had carried away to devour at leisure.

A quarter of an hour later, I was following up her trail on foot. The men of the village, some half-dozen in number, each carrying a circular shield of antelope skin and two long throwing spears, accompanied me, and assisted in tracking. This is one of the most interesting parts of a lion-hunt on foot, as one never knows when one may come upon the brute crouching under some thorn bush or dashing through the long grass.

My gun-bearer, Fara, followed with a single barrel eight-bore shot gun, loaded with ball. I had a double ten-bore rifle, by Manton, of Calcutta, a weapon I discarded next year for a double eight-bore rifle, and that in turn was subsequently exchanged for a double 577 express, by Cogswell and Harrison.

A hundred yards behind, an attendant followed with a riding pony. The country was thickly dotted with acacia bushes, but on the flat dusty soil it was easy to follow the lion-tracks and the marks caused by the dragged legs of the dangling sheep. We knew that if the lioness were to see us in the open, she would probably make for her lair in one of the small but dense patches of grass and bush.

Suddenly I saw what resembled a big yellow ball bounding over the bushes—I had seen my first uncaged African lion. I mounted and galloped after her, the trackers running on and endeavouring to keep her in sight.

She soon entered a patch of euphorbia. I crept silently to one end of this and stood ready with my rifle. A man applied a match to the grass at the other end in several places, and the bush was soon crackling briskly. Close to me for a moment appeared the lioness's head thrust from an opening, the white fangs bared and glistening, the eyes gleaming and glowing savagely. Before I could raise the rifle she was gone again, and with a crash burst out from one side and bounded across an open space. I fired, and turning completely head over heels, she fell crippled, hit through the back.

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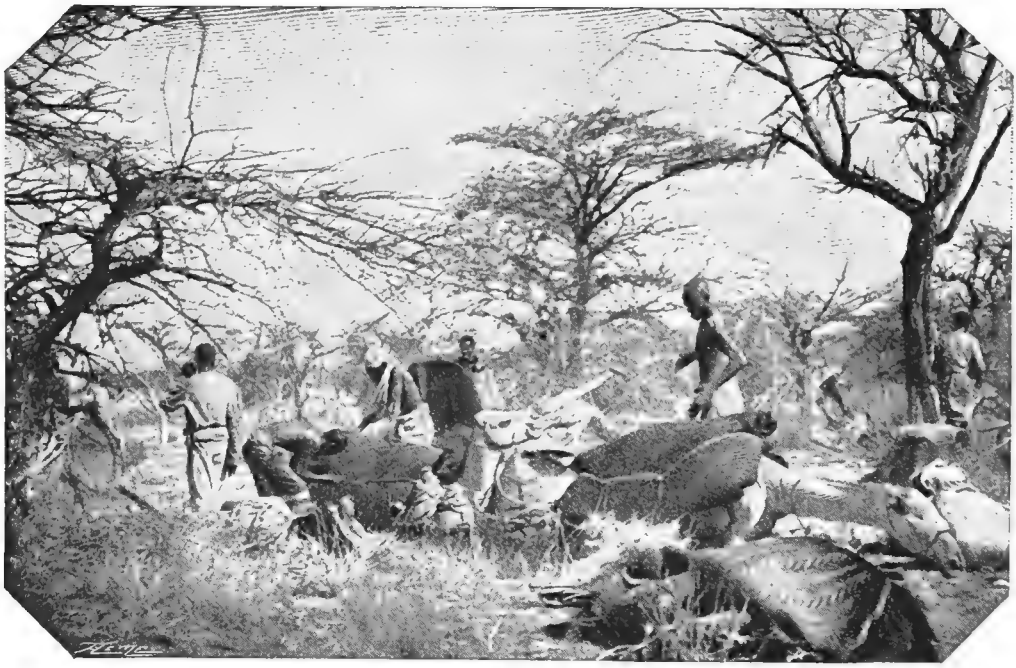

Native Attendants Roping Blankets on the Camels preparatory to Packing them with Rice, Water, and Baggage.

Giving vent to deep, rumbling growls, she tried vainly to come at me, till, approaching close to her, I killed her instantly with a ball through the neck.

After I had photographed the body of the slain, the men took off the skin and head, and I returned to camp in a contented frame of mind, the men, as is usual on these occasions, being wildly excited, and singing a kind of war song.

That same afternoon near camp I found the body of a young camel, newly-killed by a lion, and partly eaten. One could see from the marks how the lion had sprung on to the camel's back and buried its great canine teeth in the neck of its victim.

I ordered my men at once to build me a hiding-place near by, where I watched all night for the lion's return, but in vain.

I had not been long in camp next morning, when two native horsemen came tearing up, and hastily dismounted in a cloud of dust, men and horses hot, tired, and thirsty. Then through my interpreters, Mohammed and Abdool, they imparted to me the exciting information that about two hours' journey away a fine lion was devouring a camel.

It appeared that one of their best camels had strayed, and that searching for it, they had seen vultures in great numbers circling high in the air over a particular point upon the plain without daring to alight.

On riding near they discovered a fine lion feeding on the carcase of their camel. The beast had not moved at their approach, and like the House of Commons, he had been "left sitting."

In a few minutes my horse was caught and saddled, and with blankets, food, and water, and my 10-bore rifle, we swept off at a jog-trot in a cloud of dust, which never left us, the two guides in front, and eight of my men with my camera and their own spears and shields, running along behind.

After we had gone fifteen miles, winding in and out among the mimosa bushes, the two horsemen pointed overhead to the blazing zone, and I saw hundreds of vultures flying at an immense altitude. Dismounting and advancing alone on foot with my rifle, I soon caught sight of the dead camel. The lion was crouching behind it, and appeared almost exactly of the same colour as his prey. I was within eighty or ninety yards when the lion sprang out towards me and remained for some moments motionless in a defiant attitude, his fore-paws extended, his head near the ground, but his back arched.

Supposing he might be coming for me I reserved my fire—besides the distance was

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too great for an absolutely certain shot—so that I might give him my two barrels at close quarters as he was charging down at me. After that I knew I must trust to luck, as I had no second rifle or gun bearer, and should have no time to re-load..

After we had thus regarded one another for some seconds, the lion turned slowly and lumbered heavily away. I was sorry, since he had not charged, that I had not fired, and sent a bullet screaming after him through the bushes, as better late than never.

I was soon in the saddle and away upon his tracks at a gallop, accompanied by the mounted guides. The lion soon stopped under a small mimosa bush, crouching and glaring at us with waving tail as we rode round. I then approached on foot. The brute was now swaying his tail and body from side to side with much energy, and clearly upon the point of charging down to kill me.

As I walked round to get a flank shot into his shoulder, the lion moved so as to face me, keeping his body invisible, and rendering a chance shot very hazardous, the brain being the only vital part to aim for.

If one of the horsemen had only ventured near, or if the lion's attention could have been distracted for a moment towards another foe, he might have turned and given me my opportunity of fatally crippling him. The only issue was now the death of the lion, or of myself, or both. Which it was to be depended on the accuracy of my aim and the coolness of hand and eye. Every instant the beast, like a huge cat after a bird, was working himself up for the inevitable charge, lashing his great flanks with his tail. I remember wondering at that supreme moment whether the popular superstition that on the end of his tail a lion has a claw or sharp point wherewith to goad himself on to the attack, could have any ground-work of fact.

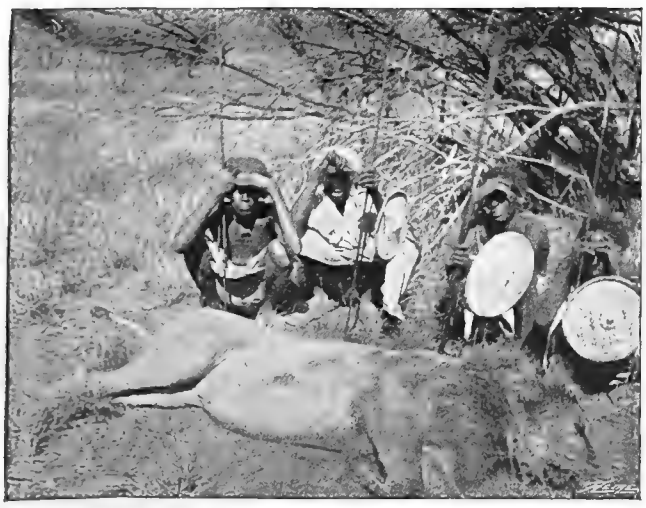
A Dead Lioness and the Ten-bore Double-barrelled Rifle with which she was killed.

I now gave up all hope of an easy shot, and feeling that further delay was impossible as he might deliver his charge at any moment, I sat down, and, resting my elbows on my knees, fired twice at his head through the bush at a distance of about sixty yards.

These shots failed to kill, and, uttering hoarse growls, the lion edged round the bush, facing me and keeping low upon the ground. I reloaded quickly, and standing upright so as to clear the grass, fired my right barrel downwards at his head.

The lion immediately rose to his feet, and charged down upon me at full speed, running swift and low. Only my left barrel remained, and, covering his chest with the sights of the rifle as he neared me, I pulled the trigger when he was a few yards distant.

Exactly what the lion did, no man will ever know, unless the



A large Lion which killed a full-grown Camel, and was subsequently followed up by Mr. Seton-Karr and shot whilst charging after two bullets had gone through its head.

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natives saw. As I stepped hastily to one side, reloading, I was struck by a shower of stones, and half blinded by a cloud of sand and dust. The lion must have passed close by me, and swung abruptly round under cover of the smoke.

When the dust cleared away, I saw the lion under the bush again—the same old bush.

He had delivered his charge, and it had failed.

It was a sick and sorry beast, and evidently disconcerted and wounded unto death. I now had an easy side shot into his shoulder, and quickly put two bullets through his heart.

I had seen one of the grandest sights of Africa—the charge upon one-self of the wild African lion, practically carried home—a charge that few have sustained and yet come off unharmed. One can have too much of a good thing, and the sight is not one that I should desire to see frequently.

Then came a renewal of the war-dance, savage exultation, face-stroking and so on, which had taken place when I killed the lioness.

A few days later a lion carried off a donkey out of a native encampment close by my camp, and by dawn I was on his tracks. Then I found there were two lions, instead of one. They finished the donkey off between them, and evidently did not desire our company, since just as we reached rocky ground, where tracking was no longer possible, they were seen stealing off without offering the chance of a shot.

Hoping, however, they might return in the night, I tethered one of my donkeys, and with Fara, my tracker, slept in a circular thorn shelter close by. The night was intensely black and cloudy, and at midnight some large animal came sniffing and breathing heavily close to my head. The donkey then began roaring, as only donkeys can when frightened, but this failed to prevent its being killed. Nor did my shooting have any effect. It was too dark to distinguish anything, but there was much tearing and crunching, and the creature returned again and again—so bold are carnivorous animals under cover of night.

My next meeting with lions was not far away—north of Harar, and on this occasion I bagged two male lions in two shots—right and left. The moon was at the full, and I was sleeping in a hiding-place built of thorns. My donkey was tethered without, and two natives by my side were keeping watch in turn. When the lion first attacked the donkey the clouds of dust prevented my

Natives bringing news of a Lion to Mr. Seton-Karr, and begging him to hunt the Beast at once.

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One of Mr. Seton-Karr's lions, the head being supported by a small Native Boy.

seeing what was taking place. I was but half awake, and fired a chance shot more with the idea of saving my donkey than anything else. The lion drew off for a moment, and, changing my gun for a double eight-bore, I waited. As the air cleared I saw a lion standing about four yards away looking at me, and I instantly fired at his chest. The donkey, having been torn free from its lashing, was hobbling towards camp. Next moment my attention was taken by a second lion, which was pulling the donkey down and killing it in earnest. Having done so, it lay behind the donkey and regarded me intently. With the left barrel of the same rifle I made an excellent shot, striking the lion on the point of the nose, the bullet penetrating into the neck. The lion did not die immediately, but continued to emit hoarse roars for some time. At daylight I found it in the centre of a thick bush, uttering most blood-curdling growls if anyone approached. It required another shot to despatch it to that bourne whence no lion ever returns.

After this adventure the lion that gave me the greatest pleasure to shoot was a cruel brute that had been preying on sheep for some time.

The natives guided me to the spot where he had entered a patch of grass eight feet high. I found the patch to be of considerable extent; but after walking round, and failing to see any tracks going out, it was clear the beast was still there. A strong breeze favoured the burning out of the lion, and the whole place was soon ablaze. It was uncertain where he would break cover, but I presently caught sight of his head and sent a bullet where I supposed his shoulders to be situated. Another shot was fired, and then there were "goings on" and "ructions" in that grass patch. There were short roars and crashings, and now and then the tail or a paw was seen. I expected every moment the lion would come tearing out. Presently the sounds ceased, but the flames were advancing, and I began to think the lion might be dead. If this were the case, we must endeavour to save his skin from the fire. Supposing we came upon him in the grass, and he were not dead, it would mean wounds or death to some of us. However, on penetrating with great caution, I caught sight of

—Two Lions shot "right and left" with a double eight-bore Rifle at Midnight by the light of a full Moon.

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the end of his tail, and presently of his back. I then put a bullet into his spine, after which the natives made a rush, and seized him by the tail, and out we dragged the Monarch of the Forest — near five hundred pounds dead weight—just ahead of the conflagration.

It was such a near thing, this race with the flames, that the heat was almost unendurable, we were fairly black with smoke and cinders, and some of the natives got their hair singed.

It may be thought that the mere pelt of a lion was not worth the risk of a mauling. This may be true; but when the ambitious lion-hunter has travelled far and endured much, he is willing to take that risk for the possession of the coveted trophy.

The Carcase of a Camel, killed and partly eaten by a lion which Mr. Seton-Karr subsequently killed.

The other lions I have met with in Africa have not all showed the same fight. They were all followed up during the day by experienced trackers; some sneaked away in time to avoid a bullet, one gave up the ghost on receiving an express bullet through the neck—he had killed a large antelope and was lying gorged by its side. One lion was taking a mid-day siesta under a tree, and when he made off, I missed him clean.

Two other lions which I followed on different occasions had each killed a wild pig —a very favourite food with the lion—and it was the trail in the sand of the dragged carcase that had first attracted the attention of the villagers who brought me the news. I saw both lions for a moment, but both escaped without a scratch.

This Lion was Tracked and Shot under a Bush.

I have, of course, killed tigers in Bengal, but I consider lion-hunting alone on foot in Africa the most exciting, the most interesting, and the most manly of all sports. I think the man who has killed a lion in fair fight, face to face, has performed a noble action, and rid the world of a splendid, but cruel and destructive brute. Notwithstanding the sun-heat and the fever, I should not be surprised if I were to kill some more before I had done. Take your old England, with her coddling grandmotherly legislation, and give me wild Nature and the dusky savage.

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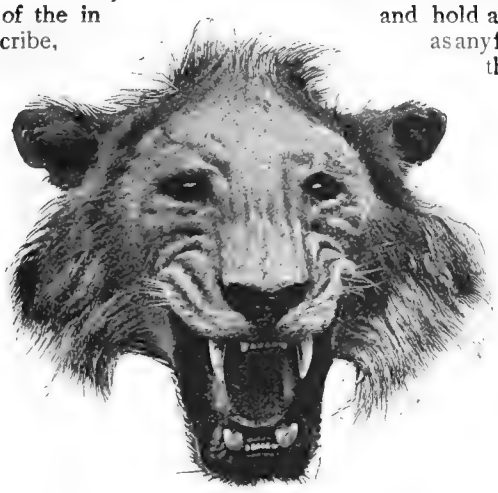
Such then are my adventures with the king of the animal world—a plain, unvarnished recital, without a single "De Rougemont" touch, as I said before. Indeed, as I read it over and think of the incidents it attempts to describe, I feel how inadequate a description it is, how pale and lifeless to the stirring reality, how impossible for any but a great writer—a man who feels strongly and can put his feeling into strong vivid words—to give anything like a true idea, a living presentment of those savage wilds and the excitement of this noblest of all sports. I unfortunately can only give the bare outline, the bald narrative; all the deep excitement of the chase remains untold; but such as it is it ought to be good reading for those who love sport, even though they should never have a chance of shooting lions. I trust I am as good a Briton as most, and hold as sincere an admiration as any for that love of home and those industrious homely virtues which characterise a great portion of the English race, and have largely but quietly helped to make our country the vast power she is. But Heaven protect *me* from this humdrum life! Heaven preserve me from sitting at a desk day in day out for the better part of my life! Heaven be thanked for those wild regions that civilisation has not yet reached—the home of the dusky savage and His Majesty the Lion!



The Head of a very fine Lion shot by the Author.

HEART'S DELIGHT.

My lady moves with winsome grace,
The joy of spring is on her face,
Its sweetness in her eyes.
The thrushes' song—the gentle breeze,
The freshness of the budding trees,
Fill her with glad surprise.

Her lawn is white with daisy flowers;
Laburnums rain their golden showers
In welcome at her feet.
The hawthorns on the daisied grass,
Drop rosy petals as we pass,
The wafting air is sweet.

The peaceful l umming of the bees,
Among the fragrant apple trees,
Makes music through the day.
The pear trees in their snowy dress,
The lilacs' dainty loveliness,
All grace my lady's way.

The blackbird whistles all day long,
The glory of the thrushes' song,
Trills out from morn till night.
My lady smiles to hear them sing,
She loves the year's new blossoming,
I call her—Heart's Delight.

L. G. Moberly.

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A STORY FOUND AMONGST SOME OLD PAPERS.

By Beatrice Heron-Maxwell.

Until I met Estella I had been rather lonely, and this not from necessity, but from choice and chance together.

A barrister's life in chambers is at his own discretion; and can be one of promiscuous gaiety, or of self-cultivation and communion. The latter seemed to suit me best and to bring least weariness; without being moody or morbid, I was leading a quiet, equable, and often solitary existence.

The stimulus of small means was wanting to make me push forward in my profession; for my father had left me ample to live on, and my ambition did not carry me beyond content.

Then one golden summer day I travelled up to a little coast village in Wales for a month's holiday, and found Estella.

Three hours of keen interest and pleasure, the day I met her first; three days of growing eagerness and half incredulous hope; and then three weeks of gradually deepening happiness, during which I learnt how dearly I loved her, and won her to love me in return.

To others she was no doubt just an attractive, winsome girl; but to some few who knew her well, and to me most of all, she had that undefined charm, that is not due to beauty, wit, or tenderness, though all three go to the making of it, but that lies in some deeper, inner attribute of womanhood in its perfection; a charm of soul-sympathy, given and demanded, that strong manhood must always feel and reciprocate.

I knew that I had found my Holy Grail.

We were married in the little quaint old church on the hill, and the night before our wedding Mrs. Bouverie said to me, "I should like just a few quiet words with you, Harry. Essie must lend you to me for half-an-hour."

Estella laughed, and laid her arm caressingly round her mother's neck.

"One would think you were going to improve the occasion, mother, and give him a lecture. Don't be alarmed, Harry. Mother will let you off easily, I daresay."

She stepped out into the garden, and I drew my chair closer to Mrs. Bouverie's sofa, for she was almost an invalid, and seldom stirred from it.

She laid her hand on mine, and held up with the other a letter, addressed to myself in her own handwriting:

H. Castlement, Esq.,

Not to be opened until September 1st.

The first anniversary of our wedding day!

"I have been debating about this for a week," she said, "wondering if I should give it to you now, or put it off till later, or let things take their chance—and at last I have settled to give it to you to-night, and ask you to keep it until you and Essie have been married for a year, and then to open it—but not before, unless there seems to you some grave reason for doing so. When you read it you may be able to smile at what has

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proved to be a vain superstitious fancy on my part. Or, on the other hand, you may find the explanation of something that has grieved and puzzled you. I cannot tell. I can only hope I am acting for the best."

I begged her not to distress herself, for I saw that she was very near to tears, and strong in my love for Estella, I did not fear any possibility that our life together might bring.

"If her father were still alive," continued Mrs. Bouverie, "his sound sense and judgment would have decided the question for me. Colonel Bouverie knew all that is written in that letter, but we never spoke of it, and he had led me to ignore it, even if I could not forget it. But since his death two years ago, I have had to think seriously of Essie's future; for she has no near relations on either side to whom I should care to entrust her at my death."

"That is, I hope, a long way off," I said, taking the letter. "Dear Mrs. Bouverie, my whole happiness—my life itself—is bound up in Estella. I am so sure of myself that I will burn the letter now, if you will let me, and ask you never to reveal its contents to me."

"No, no, Harry," she exclaimed, "you must not do that. It is written down at last, and it shall stay there, until you read it, for better or for worse; I will no longer doubt about it. You have settled all the vexed questions in my mind, and the matter is ended. Go to Essie, dear, and tell her your lecture is over. Of course I need not ask you never to repeat a word of this to her."

And when I had given my promise, and put the letter safely away under lock and key, I dismissed it from my mind altogether.

What did anything in the world, past, present, or future, matter to me when to-morrow was to give me Estella?

It was an idyllic wedding, as different as it could possibly be from the huge society side-shows that are like competitive examinations; the highest places in the list being awarded to those candidates who can count most notabilities present, and most presents from notabilities.

Estella walked down her own garden pathway on a carpet of flowers strewn for her by loving hands, and across to the little church opposite, where friends who came for friendship's sake were assembled.

Randolph, of the Chancery bar, the man I know and like best in the world came all the way from town to "see me through," as he put it, and acknowledged the justification of my happiness when he saw Estella, by the sentiments he infused in the exclamation, "By Jove!"

There is an hour in every woman's life, they say, when plainness is transfigured to beauty, and beauty excels itself. Such an hour came to Estella then. She looked ethereal in the loveliness of her starlike face, deep soft eyes, and tremulous sweet lips.

It is like a dream now—the remembrance of that day; and the weeks that followed it, and that grew into months, seem, too, as though they belonged to some other life, unreal, intangible.

I found myself at times facing the thought

Estella walked down her own garden pathway on a carpet of flowers.

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for a moment that something might change her to me, or part her from me, and turning coward at it; with the knowledge of what it would mean.

Some such thought as this was in my mind one evening when Randolph had been dining with us, and after dinner Estella had sung and played and talked with more than even her usual vivacity and charm.

"What a lucky chap you are," said Randolph, with meditative regret, as she closed the door after she had left us.

He looked round the smoking-room with its lining of books, its comfortable chairs, its many details of ease and ornament, and his eyes rested on a lace handkerchief that Estella had dropped, and that lay at his feet.

"That is the secret of the whole thing," he said, picking it up and throwing it across to me in affected impatience. "You lucky chap!" he said again.

The putting of my good luck into words seemed to reassure me, and when later he went away and I closed the front door after him, I murmured "You lucky chap!" to myself as though it were a refrain that must inevitably conclude each verse.

Then I went upstairs to bed.

It was a bright moonlight night, and I had a momentary sensation of weirdness as I passed along the passage, and noticed how sharp the lights and shadows were in the white radiance.

The sound of someone laughing and singing struck with sudden incongruity into this luminous stillness, and I paused at the door of our room in a hesitation of startled and vexed amazement.

Estella was generally asleep when I came up after a chat in the smoking-room; besides, the voice and laugh were unlike hers. Then I opened the door.

The lamps were out, but the room was bright as day with the flood of silver light that streamed in at the window, from which the curtain had been drawn back.

Standing in the very centre of it, looking at her own reflection in a long cheval glass, was Estella—my wife.

Her arms were raised above her head, the wide sleeves of the white dressing-gown she wore falling away from her shoulders, and leaving them bare; her hair was down, and fell in a wavy mass to her waist.

She had twisted flowers and jewels in it, and wound them round her neck and arms, and even round her bare ankles, in the most fantastic fashion; and in her hands she was holding a bunch of crimson flowers, the loosened petals of which fell on her upturned face, and showered down on her white dress like drops of blood.

With a slow rhythmic movement she was swaying to and fro in the way that Nautch girls begin their dances, and while she swayed she sang and laughed to herself.

As I stood spell-bound, a lightning shaft of unnamed dread piercing my very soul, she saw me in the looking-glass, and remained transfixed and silent.

Her lips were set in the strange smile they wore when I entered; her eyes growing to the reflected vision of mine, which met them in the mirror—God! there was no mistaking the look on her face, the glittering brilliance of her eyes. She was mad! Breathless, a grip of horror clutching at my heart and throat, I advanced slowly towards her, still holding her mirrored eyes with mine.

Slowly she backed away from me, till she reached the corner of the wall, and there she crouched, as a wild trapped thing may crouch when it is at bay, and there is no outlet for it. Nearer and nearer, with the horrible pain tightening at every step, I came to her, and then—I saw her eyes flame red and darken, and I knew she was going to spring.

With a hoarse cry of her name I seized her, and fought with her, holding her down by force and a strength of desperation that was almost as maniacal as hers, and at last I got the better of her, and she lay helpless and panting locked in my arms. She—my love—my idol—my wife lay there, spent, suffering, distraught—done almost to death with the violence of our struggle. It was dark in the corner of the room where our struggle had taken place, and I was between her and the window, so that no ray of light could reach her. I could not see her face, but I felt after a few moments that her eyes were no longer on mine, and gradually the tension of her hands and of her whole frame relaxed.

She lay inert and passive, and as I waited, afraid still to move, I heard her breathing grow quieter and more regular, until, at last, I knew by its sound she was asleep.

With a prayer of thankfulness at this merciful respite, however short it might be, I lifted her gently, and, carrying her to the bed, laid her down.

Then hurrying to the window I drew the curtain—for the moonlight seemed to me ghastly and unbearable—and lit a small lamp, which I shaded from her eyes. And then I sat beside her and kept watch for the rest of that awful night. A lonely vigil! If ever in the old days I had fancied myself solitary, I

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would gladly have gone back to them from the agony of loneliness that possessed me now.

My mind refused to believe in this calamity that had given to me something worse than bereavement, and I found myself murmuring as I looked at the white face on the pillow, with its old gentleness of expression stealing over the features—"You lucky chap!"

It was early in the morning, when sunrise shone through the curtains and the wakening birds sang a hymn of dawn, that she stirred and opened her eyes.

When she saw me she smiled—a divine smile of love and trustfulness.

"Why Harry," she said softly, stretching out her hand to me, "what are you getting up so early for? You look as if you had never been to bed all night—so tired. You silly boy!"

I had nerved myself for a terrible scene with her; I had been summoning all my courage to face this awful doom for her and myself, and the second shock was too great for me—I fell on my knees beside her, and buried my face, and burst into tears.

I saw her eyes flame red and darken, and I knew she was going to spring.

With sweetest pitying tenderness, she put her arms round my neck and soothed me, while I brokenly explained that I had had a horrible dream about her which I could not shake off and which had unnerved me.

"It is strange," she said, when she had persuaded me to lie down and rest, "but I fancy I must have had a bad dream too, Harry. I am so tired out, and see my wrists are bruised and painful."

I should perhaps have found it more difficult to hide from her the real cause of my distress but for an event that took her thoughts away entirely.

This was the sudden death of her mother, of which we heard by telegram early that same morning. Mrs. Bouverie had suffered from a weak heart, and had passed away peacefully in her sleep the night before.

In her sorrow, Estella forgot everything else, and I, finding no trace in her of the strange possession of that night, put the thought aside until after our return from Wales.

Then I remembered the letter that Mrs. Bouverie had given to me, and her permission to open it in any perplexity.

I felt sure that it must hold some explanation of this awful occurrence, and I decided to read it at once.

"Years ago," it began, "when I was in India, where my husband was stationed, and Estella was a baby of two, a strange thing happened to me. My ayah, of whom I was very fond, died suddenly, and to replace her came a Pathan woman, whom from the first moment I instinctively disliked. But I could find no other in the place. She was a dark, handsome creature with stormy eyes.

"The baby did not thrive under her care, yet I was afraid to say much to her about it; though my husband laughed my fears to

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scorn. 'Find out somehow or other,' he said, 'whether it is her fault that Estella is not well, and, if it is, give her the sack at once.' I decided therefore to watch her carefully. For two nights nothing happened; on the third, I saw the ayah steal out of the nursery, down the verandah steps, and away.

"I ran to my baby's cot and found her sleeping so heavily that I could not rouse her. She had been drugged; and I then felt no doubt that the ayah had constantly done this in order to go out when she wished unsuspected. I called my husband, and together we waited until about three hours later ayah returned. Then he spoke to her for me; a few short, sharp words of dismissal with the proviso that if our little girl should be seriously ill—for she was still unconscious—we should require her to answer for it.

"She made no reply to him, but turned and looked at me steadily for a moment. There was concentrated malignity in her gaze.

"Then with a singular rapid sign of her fingers over the baby, whom I was holding in my arms, she began to speak in a rapid monotone, and though my husband strove to stop her, it was useless. I gathered from the few words of her language that I knew, that she was uttering a curse, and afterwards at my earnest pleading my husband told me what she had said.

"I can see her now, standing in the bright moonlight that fell from the verandah window right on to me and Estella; her dark hands lifted menacingly above her head, her attitude that of a cobra when it is about to strike.

"'Wait,' she said, 'till the child you hold in your arms is grown to womanhood: then shall the curse fall upon her. She shall be cursed by the moon, she, and one girl-child of every generation that follows her. Whenever the moon looks on her as it is looking now, she shall be given over to the spirits of darkness and evil.'

"Then she turned and went out into the night, and we never saw her again. Estella was very ill for some days, for the constant drugging had undermined her health, but we pulled her through.

"My husband treated the Pathan woman's threat lightly, but it has dwelt in my mind ever since. To those who have lived much in India and have learnt something of its wild and mysterious people, with their inexplicable powers, this will not seem absurd. I can only pray and trust that her curse will never be verified."

That was all.

For many weary months I carried in my heart this secret with the dread that its sequel, about which no disbelief was possible, would recur.

Often during the long nights when the moon was at its full I kept guard sleeplessly over Estella, fearful lest she should discover that I did so, feeling at times as though the curse had come upon me also, and would some day hold me under its spell. And then one night, sick at heart, tired out with watching, I slept, and while I was asleep she must have awakened, and drawn by some weird influence, have gone to the window and pulled back the curtains, letting the light fall uninterruptedly upon her.

I sat beside her and kept watch for the rest of that awful night.

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Some intuitive sense of danger made me restless in my sleep, and suddenly I awoke to find her bending over me, that fearful look upon her face again, and in her upraised hand —a knife.

I cannot describe this second struggle between us; my soul faints at the thought of it. When it was over, and I had once more gained the mastery, and when as before she fell asleep exhausted, I could only pray that a merciful Providence would take her from me in her sleep, as her mother had been taken—before some awful tragedy divided us, and revealed to her the knowledge of this deadly blight that had come into our lives. From time to time as the year went on, in spite of all my care, the same thing happened; it seemed as though some stronger power than my will, and my devotion to her, mocked at my efforts to save her from the Spell. The strain of always watching for it, of feeling that so slight a barrier stood between the sanity and insanity of the wife who was all in all to me, told upon me physically and mentally.

She began to notice it, and wonder at it herself; and I read more than once in her eyes a dawning fear of me; a transient suspicion that there was something I concealed from her, some touch of remorse, of alarm—of—perhaps, latent madness. I found myself laughing actually laughing once, at the thought that this last idea should come to her about me; the irony of it struck me with such force.

Her terror at my causeless mirth recalled me to my senses which were certainly unhinged at the moment and restored their balance—I vowed to myself I would never laugh again.

"I tell you what it is," said Randolph seriously to me one evening at this time, "there is something radically wrong with you, Castlement, and if you will take my advice, you will give up work, shut up your house, and travel for at least a year. I don't want to force your confidence, but I have been watching you for some weeks, and I think Mrs. Castlement feels uneasy about you too. You want a change, and fortunately you are one of those who can have what they want."

"A lucky chap," I quoted bitterly.

He stared at me in troubled surprise, and I felt that the same suspicion had entered his mind also.

I decided to take his advice, and see if the strain proved lighter with other surroundings, than it did at home.

"Why not go to India," Estella said, "I was born there you know, Harry, and it would interest me doubly to see the places that mother used to live in. Take me there."

She laid her own white hand on the woman's brown one, and the latter held it up to her lips.

Thank God, I granted her wish!

It was on our arrival at Bombay, at Watson's Hotel, where we went direct on landing, that the crisis came.

The voyage had passed safely as far as Estella was concerned. There had been no recurrence of what I dreaded for her.

But for me, I felt as if the beginning of the end had come; life had become unendurable to me, yet I longed to live for her sake, to shield her from the interference of others, who, were her secret known, might place her under restraint.

The thought of my darling amongst strangers, treated as a dangerous lunatic, was maddening to me; it haunted me night and day.

The cloud between Estella and myself had deepened; my depression affected her, and I could see that she was growing afraid of me.

It was our first night at Watson's, and, believing that Estella was safe, since the night was dark and moonless, I had allowed myself to fall asleep, with no special thought of her in my mind.

About two in the morning I awoke—to find her gone.

A ray of moonlight striking in between the venetians fell on the pillow where her head had rested, and showed me that my sense of security had played me false.

Dressing with frenzied haste, I ran out into

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the passage, and ascended to the next floor in search of her.

The light shining through a door that stood slightly ajar, drew me towards it, and the glimpse of a white figure standing just inside impelled me to push it open and enter.

Estella was standing motionless and upright, looking like a spirit in her long white robes. Sitting upon a rug on the floor facing her was a dark woman in native dress, old and ugly, the paleness of a great terror shining in her eyes, and showing under the olive brownness of her skin.

Her hands were stretched out as though to ward off Estella's approach. She was muttering and crying incoherently. Even as I stood there someone brushed past me—an Englishman, and went towards the woman, asking her what had happened and why she was calling out.

She answered him in her native tongue, then, still gazing at Estella, lifted her arms above her head, and chanted something in a curious sing-song tone.

The man looked at me with a smile.

"I suppose," he said, that she has been making a noise in her sleep, and disturbed you so that you came to see what is the matter. She is my wife's ayah and has a habit of somnambulism. Do not be alarmed. I am sorry this lady—your wife?—has been frightened."

I had been holding Estella's hand, and watching her face, which had changed its expression of furious cunning for one of divine compassion and sweetness. She put her hand to her forehead now with a sigh and said, "I must have been walking in my sleep, too, and I suppose her voice attracted me in here. But why is she alarmed (for the woman still crouched and sobbed in terror), what does she say?"

"She says," said the man, "that you are a ghost come to kill her. She declares that she laid you under a curse years ago, and that she removes it now and begs you to forgive her. It is a dream, no doubt, but if you would assure her of your forgiveness she would be quieted, and then I will bring my wife to look after her."

Quietly Estella went towards her and said.

"Do not be alarmed. I have quite forgiven you, and I shall never come to frighten you again. See, the curse is gone, and we are friends."

She laid her own white hand on the woman's brown one for a moment, and the latter caught it between hers and held it to her lips.

"Thanks," said the man; "now she will be all right, I am sure. I am so sorry you should have been disturbed."

I drew Estella away, and led her gently down-stairs to our room, which was now bathed in a flood of moonlight.

"How strange it was, Harry," she said, clinging to me; "I had no idea before that I walked in my sleep. Did you guess it?"

She was trembling and looking into my face with troubled, questioning eyes. "Ah, yes, I can see that you did. Oh, Harry, is that what has worried you and made you ill? Is that why you murmur my name so often in your sleep? Is that the shadow that has come between us? Oh, tell me, husband darling. If that is all, I can bear that; and perhaps I shall never walk again now that I have had this horrid awakening. I suppose that woman thought I was a ghost, poor thing, and remembered someone whom she had wronged in the past. If so, I am glad to have set it right. Oh, Harry, did you keep it from me because you thought it would be bad for me to know? I feel as if we were going to be like we were at first, one in heart and mind, you and I. I feel as if a weight were lifted off me. Speak to me, Harry! Tell me our happiness has come back to us."

And at last I could hold her in my arms again, and tell her, with no after-thought of fear or grief between us, that our lost happiness had come back, and that she and I were at one again for always. There is no one in the world, except myself, who knows the truth of this strange story, for even the Pathan only dimly guesses that fate gave her a chance of redemption, and attributes the episode of that evening to the supernatural powers that she invoked to her aid, and that, in their caprice, turned upon her and sent their victim to avenge herself.

And into this question of the invisible world I dare not enter even in my thoughts. I can only vouch for the truth of these bare facts, and accept with untold thankfulness the blessed certainty that the blight on Estella's life has gone for ever.

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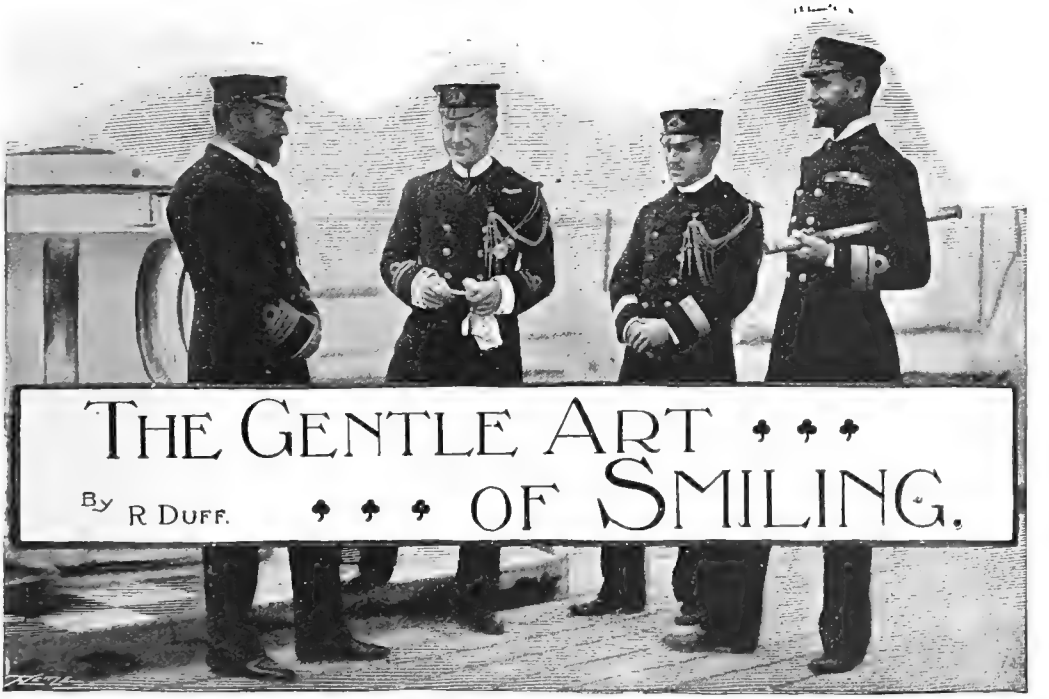

THE GENTLE ART OF SMILING.

By R DUFF.

Photo by W. Gregory & Co.

Four Nautical Smiles. Admiral Seymour and his Staff on board H.M.S. Anson.

WE have often been told not to place any trust in first impressions, nor to allow ourselves to be influenced by appearances, impressions being, so they say, synonymous with illusions, and appearances being deceptive. As such advice has been received as oracular wisdom by the world for generations, it is, perhaps, a little presumptious in anyone to raise a humble objection. Nevertheless, I own to having a strong faith in these tabooed impressions and appearances—a faith based, moreover, on experience, for I have very seldom found either entirely at fault. Just as a painter's rough sketch may give quite as true an idea of the landscape as his picture with all the details painted in, so your impressions of a person, derived from all that meets the eye and ear at the first meeting, may be, and, in my case, generally are, a very fair estimate of his character. Of course, this estimate often undergoes great modifications; the person you put down as detestable may even turn out a very good fellow, or *vice versâ;* but this does not by any means condemn your first impressions as erroneous. It means, as often as otherwise, that your acquaintance has two sides to his character, the pleasant side coming out later, and happening to be stronger, than the unpleasing.

Photo by London Stereoscopic Co.

Miss Loie Fuller's Stupendous Smile.

However, reliable or not, the taking of impressions and the study of physiognomy are most diverting pastimes, a taste for which should be acquired, and especially by such as are compelled to travel much by railway or omnibus.

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If you have exhausted your newspaper, and the flying landscape has no particular attractions to offer, begin to make a study of your neighbours' faces and you will find it endlessly entertaining. There sits a comfortable middle-aged man, dignified and puffy, cheek by jowl with a lean unwholesome clerk; there a fresh-looking girl, and beside her an old man with a face like a shrivelled apple; then the spectacled, pugnacious-looking woman, and at her elbow a child with great candid eyes—a wonderful variety of faces, each with a special soul now peeping out, and now retiring; now hurriedly eluding your eye, and now laying itself unconsciously open to inspection.

Photo by Chas. Knight.

Her Majesty's Gracious Smile of Welcome.

A face in perfect repose, that is, with the minimum of expression on it, is very often a sealed book, even to the most practised physiognomist. It is on the face in motion, and, above all, on the smiling face, that you are most likely to find any information you may be seeking. For a smile contains such an infinite amount of meaning! Why, if smiles were merely visible expressions of amusement, they would be endlessly interesting; as it is, the amused smile is but one member of how vast a family. Smiles! Smiles! I could fill a couple of pages or more of this magazine with a mere enumeration of their names, each name describing a smile of totally varying significance. Let me give a few of the commonest—those which we may see every day if only we keep our eyes open and practise a little physiological observation. Thus we have the condescending smile, the angry smile, the self-satisfied smile, the contemptuous smile, the arch smile, the indulgent smile, the sad smile—all these and many more, each with an endless number of variations, and each, according to the frequency with which you detect it on a person's face, significant of some peculiar trait in his character.

But the amused smile is, after all, the most frequent, and, humour being a very important part of our nature, it is also, I think, of more interest than the others. We are told that our possession of the sense of humour constitutes one of the chief differences between us and the lower animals. So at least people declare who ought to know—sages and scientists—and back up their statements with all manner of learned proofs, which I, for one, have never read or mean to read. For I am positively certain (without, however, being able to give any "learned proofs") that many animals have quite as strong a sense of the ridiculous, and see the point of a joke quite as clearly, often even more clearly, than their lords and masters. I remember well on one occasion how a friend of mine in the course of a rather absorbing conversation thrust, inadvertently, the glowing end of a cigarette between his lips. A green parrot in the room showed his appreciation of this little misadventure by laughing heartily, if a trifle unkindly. My friend failed to see the joke. Who, then, I ask, had the finer

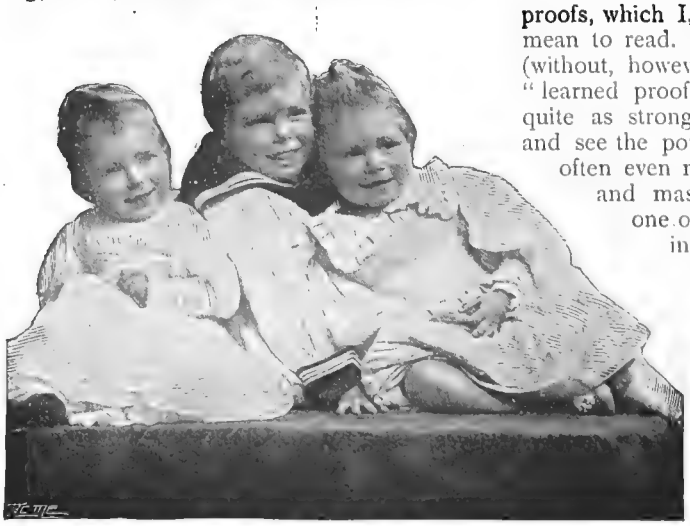

Photo by Gunn & Stuart.

The Smiles of our Future King and his Brother and Sister.

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sense of humour — my friend or the parrot?

Think, moreover, of cats and dogs. Surely there is no animal, human or otherwise, like the dog for appreciating broad, boisterous fun, and smiling—with his tail; and as for the cat, she is certainly a most subtle humorist. Have you never seen a cat sitting perfectly still, as though she were carved in stone, but with a smile on her face which, though assuredly a smile of humorous reflection, baffles analysis? What may be passing through that cat's mind? What indeed! The man who discovers her thoughts will no longer be puzzled by the strange, enigmatic smile of the Sphinx.

An amusing study in purely humorous smiles is given on one of the accompanying photographs. A small crowd, composed largely of children, is gathered in front of a "Punch and Judy" show. Everyone seems more or less amused, a notable exception being the little damsel who stands in the right corner. She is obviously above entertainments of so trivial a nature. But just observe the white-bearded old fellow a few yards directly behind this serious-minded young person. Here, surely, are the respective parts of youth and age strangely reversed! He has scarcely a tooth to boast of, but that does not for a moment prevent him showing his gums in a grin of the most intense satisfaction. Indeed, if you glance along the background, you will see plenty of adults, and nearly all of them as genuinely pleased as those delighted youngsters in the foreground. Another interesting figure is that of the youth standing with his hand in his pocket a little to the left of the solemn child aforementioned. He is a typical farmer's lad, heavy, and, I should say, not over bright in the upper storey.

Photo by Hill & Saunders.
The Prince's good-natured Smile.

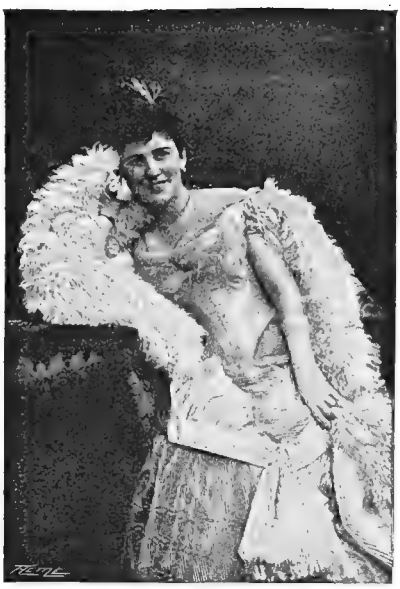

Photo by London Stereoscopic Co.
Madame Nordica's Smile suggests *ennui.*

Nevertheless, he sees the fun, and appreciates it in his own way. Those folds on his forehead do not signify supercilious wonder at all this childish hilarity—certainly not. They merely prove that he is opening his eyes to their utmost extent, so as not to lose anything of the show. His mouth is not parted in a typical smile, but it indicates, without a doubt, sincere enjoyment.

To turn suddenly from these specimens of simple, straightforward, bucolic smiles to the smiles of great and celebrated men and women is, after all, not so very startling. There may be many variations of humour, to wit—broad humour, ironical humour, American, Irish, and so on—but all these variations have this in common; they are meant to produce smiles, and no amount of fame and wealth and learning can greatly alter the nature of a smile. Compare, for instance, the smile of the old toothless joker of the "Punch and Judy" crowd with that of His Holiness the Pope. You would, to be sure, never imagine the great Pontiff to be looking on at a "Punch and Judy" show; but his smile which is less one of amusement than gentle friendliness, has this in common with the smile of the old countryman—it makes his face eminently pleasant to

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look at, severely intellectual and ascetic as that face is.

A study in clerical smiles would make, I think, an interesting article by itself, if one were fortunate enough to get the pastors of varying sects and denominations to smile into the camera. For, serious although the nature of his calling is, the cleric is most prodigal with his smiles, more so than the doctor, the lawyer, the journalist, or the man of business; more so, indeed, than the follower of any other calling. And then the almost endless variety of the clerical smile! For each different party, each different sect and denomination, has a special and characteristic smile of its own. I suppose we all know the doctor's professional smile—a smile suavely treacherous, terribly bland, and very interesting—if one happens to be in perfect health when observing it (which is seldom the case; for who has seen a doctor smile when his "client" is in fit condition?). But surgeon, oculist, dentist, and other "healers," all share, with little essential difference, this delightful smile between them. Not so the cleric. You will never persuade me that the Presbyterian minister shares his smile with the Jesuit priest, or the old-fashioned country parson of sporting proclivities with his cheery Calvinistic brother. A smile in common between such would be an utter impossibility, the upholder of each denomination having a totally different outlook upon life. In any case, the clerical smile in all its variations is eminently agreeable—a compliment I would gladly pay the surgeon, the dentist, and other helpful members of the community if I were not afraid of making myself slightly ridiculous.

Photo by London Stereoscopic Co

Who could Resist Miss Lily Hanbury's Smile?

Intelligent, but hardly severely intellectual, and certainly not ascetic, the Prince of Wales's face has always seemed to me the very type of good-nature and tolerance. It is the face of one most indulgent with the faults and foibles of his fellow creatures, the face of an easy-going judge, of a man whose nature is altogether alien to sudden enthusiasms such as keep his Imperial Nephew of Germany in so chronic a fever. Have you ever seen a portrait of the Prince depicting him as an individual of haughty and stern demeanour? Does such a thing exist? I think not. Grave he may sometimes look, but you will always be able to detect a humorous twinkle in his eye, and a friendly expression in the corners of his mouth. In the accompanying photograph he is

Photo by Gregory & Co.

By permission of the *Navy and Army Illustrated*.

The Duke of Connaught appreciates Lord Wolseley's Joke.

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Photo by West & Sons.

The Duke of York is Amused.

palpably amused, and more tolerant-looking, more good-natured, more friendly than ever.

To judge by the smile on the Duke of Connaught's face, Lord Wolseley must be spinning some very pleasant yarn. The Duke's well-groomed, handsome features are crumpled up almost beyond recognition. His face, like that of the Prince of Wales, is habitually, and, even at its gravest, full of good nature, though always with a fine touch of dignity that becomes it well. But where is the princely dignity in the face as we see it here? Ah, that pleasant yarn!

From the genial smiles of these royal brothers, it is rather surprising to turn to that of the Duke of York. Not that his smile is in any way unpleasing—quite otherwise; but it is not the smile of a man easy-going and happy-natured like the Prince, his father. The Duke has, to all appearances, known troubles, and they have marked his face, and tinged his smile with melancholy—vague, I admit, and perceptible less on his lips than about his eyes.

If we turn to the photograph of Admiral Seymour and his staff, at the head of this article, we have the amused smiles of four men, all of them essentially sailors, though of different types. The Admiral himself, standing on the left with a telescope under his arm, and the officer facing him (just observe the latter—he might pose as jollity personified!) are neither likely to be very much dreaded as commanders. Both of them take life easily, and appreciate holidays as much, yes, and perhaps even more, than work. On the other hand, precision, discipline, industry are all written on that officer's face, who has chosen to finger a pair of white gloves while posing for his photograph. You may be quite certain that he has a very good cause for smiling. He would never laugh at a poor or trivial joke (I suspect his right-hand neighbour would laugh at pretty well anything), and his smile—restrained, tight, and dignified—is eminently characteristic. The officer at his left elbow would seem to be only mildly amused, but his smile, though less sensational than that of his colleagues, is pregnant with suggestion. It is that of a man with a strong sense of humour, but chary of smiles and laughter—a not

Photo by R. Banks.

Our Snapshooter Captures Mrs. Langtry's Polite Smile.

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uncommon combination, or, shall I say, contradiction—especially among Englishmen.

There are, as I remarked before, smiles of every possible description, and many of them the very reverse from pleasing. But the majority, after all, are good to see, some delightful, and one species at least, positively intoxicating. I mean the gracious white smile of a beautiful woman. Do you know anything in the world better worth seeing? It is wonderful to think how much money we spend, and how far we travel, merely to catch a glimpse of the Pyramids, the Alps, the Colosseum, when all the while something fairer and endlessly new—to wit, this gracious white smile—is always to be seen and without payment or travel.

Photo by Barrauds.
The Pope's Welcome Smile for Pilgrims.

Surely beautiful women might amass large fortunes if they resolutely determined to remain serious except for an ample consideration. You have only to reflect a moment on a situation so appalling to feel how grateful we should be to women such as Madame Nordica for their prodigal generosity. Why, if they chose, these fair dames could enrich themselves beyond the dreams of avarice, and beggar the poor lords of creation.

Madame Nordica's is not only the smile of a beautiful woman, it is that of a woman of genius; the smile, moreover, of one who has had a large and varied experience of the world, and is familiar with, and perhaps a little weary of, fame and adulation. One detects also a touch of conscious and amply justified superiority about it, and this surely gives it a charm of which the smile of a

Photo by F. Precce.
The Masses Smile. A Crowd before a Punch and Judy Show.

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woman, whose sole gift is her beauty, is often sadly deficient.

Decidedly the smile on Miss Lily Hanbury's lips and in her eyes is one calculated to imperil the heart of a young man of susceptible disposition. If it were habitual on such a face, it is greatly to be feared that heart-disease of a certain dreadful nature might speedily become an epidemic. But Miss Hanbury is a clever actress, and means only to show what she is capable of in the event of her suddenly conceiving a violent hatred for the bearded sex. Let us all pray that this may never come to pass!

Quite unique is our snap-shot of Mrs. Langtry. She is obviously altogether unconscious of a villainous snap-shooter prowling around, and the captured smile, unlike that of Miss Hanbury, is absolutely normal. It is difficult to discover any characteristic significance in a smile that seems to me one of mere conventional politeness. Her companion has seemingly told her something which is of greater interest to himself than to her; she, however, thinks it right and proper to show some amusement, hence the smile. This, of course, is merely a surmise; she may be deeply interested and deeply amused. You must judge for yourself.

When I spoke of a beautiful woman's smile being the fairest sight on earth, I forgot a child's smile, which is, perhaps, quite as charming in its own way. How delightful are those juvenile smiles that greet you in the "Punch and Judy" photograph! Delightful also the smile, at once gracious and condescending, of His Royal Highness, Prince Edward of York, and those of his brother and sister.

As I am speaking of children's smiles, I should like to say a word about their sense of humour. For a child's sense of humour is most extraordinary and original, and I have never been able to satisfy myself as to whether it is immature, or, in reality, more fully developed than our own. Let the following incidents serve as examples of what I mean. Thinking to give a young friend of mine—he was five or six years old, I forget which—a memorable treat, I took him to a pantomime. Imagine my chagrin and disappointment when, during all the scenes which kept the house in a continuous uproar, he maintained a most judicial severity of countenance, and stared at the stage with great, solemn eyes. Suddenly his face rippled all over with delight, and pulling at my sleeve, he pointed, not at the stage, but at a portly old gentleman sitting close by and enjoying the performance rather immoderately considering his years.

"Look at that fat gentleman laffin'," he whispered loud enough for the "fat, laffin' gentleman" to hear. "Look how funnily his big sides shake!"

Now I ask you, whose sense of humour was the subtler: that of the old gentleman "laffin'" at a performance so absolutely idiotic, when one comes to think about it, as a pantomime, or that of my young friend, who disdained the pantomime, but found something exquisitely comic in the old gentleman's hilarity? And yet this same child, one day when I slipped and badly sprained my ankle, stood over me—I was writhing and groaning with anguish at the time—and gravely declared that he thought my performance quite funny, but believed he could do much better himself, and, suiting the action to the words deliberately set himself to parody my writhings. Yes! juvenile sense of humour is most extraordinary and original!

Finally, I should like you to contrast two smiles, both notable in their way—that of our gracious Queen, and that of Miss Loie Fuller. Her Majesty's is a smile of recognition, of welcome, and not of amusement; and, after closely examining Miss Fuller's, I am inclined to think it expressive of welcome as well as of the appreciation of some stupendous joke. Was there ever such a smile since the world began? Why, looking at the mere portrait, I seem to see those eyes dancing and to hear volleys of silvery laughter. How different is the smile of our good Queen! I always think, though I believe I am alone in so thinking, that, for all its inherent kindliness, Her Majesty's face, when in perfect repose, is somewhat cold and proud. A mere smile—and although the Queen is still visible in every feature, the woman, gracious, friendly, pleased, is now predominant. This portrait, the only one of its kind, I think, will assuredly go down to posterity, and be remembered and loved, when thrice statelier portraits shall have lost their interest or been forgotten.

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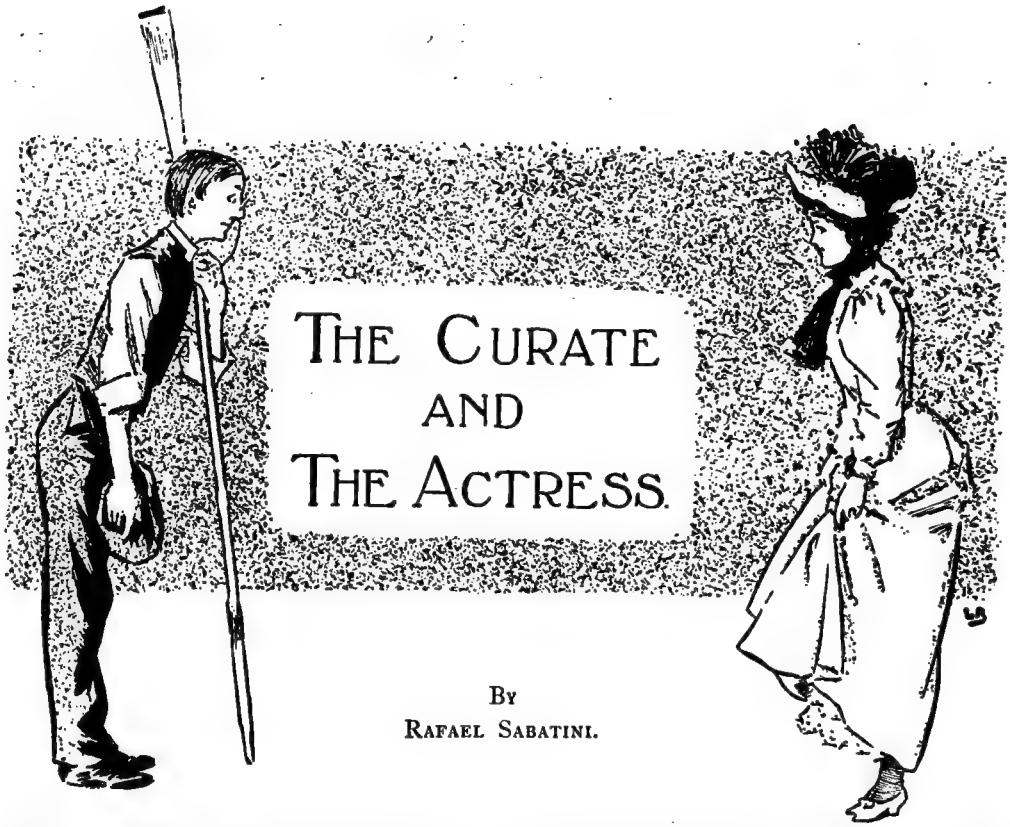

THE CURATE AND THE ACTRESS.

By
Rafael Sabatini.

When I mention that Andrew Barrington was a saint, it is almost unnecessary for me to add that he had no pretentions to that emptiest of empty titles, "A Man of the World," for it is already an established and recognised fact that Sanctity is a quality not generally reckoned among the many accomplishments of such.

To thoroughly avoid evil it is necessary to be on intimate terms with it, and where a hardened sinner would have triflingly withstood its onslaught, the Reverend Andrew Barrington was conquered and laid by the heels, despite his armour of piety and virtue, on the strength of which he had reckoned over confidently.

Now, when Andrew's landlady diffidently mentioned that a young lady of the theatrical profession had taken rooms, for a month or so, in her house, a man of the world would have said to himself, "Let us have a look at her." He would have availed himself of the first opportunity to submit the lady to his critical eye, remarking perhaps, "not bad," and then his *blasé* spirit would have been at rest, and he would have thought of her no more.

But Andrew's mode of procedure was unfortunately a less wise, and, despite his sanctity, a less exemplary one.

He grew red in the face when the news was brought to him and worried over the event for two entire days—and the better part of two nights, which resulted in a certain pallor and seedy appearance settling upon his countenance, such as slanderous tongues—if there were any in the world—might set down to dissipation.

To have a woman, and a young one to wit, sharing the same roof was evil enough; but that this woman should be an actress!—a saintly shudder ran through his slender young frame at the mere thought, and for forty-eight consecutive hours he dared not venture forth lest he should chance upon this vulgar painted female, with straw-coloured hair and pencilled lashes, of whom he had caught a glimpse through the window on the day following upon that of her arrival.

He had been glad to come to Stollbridge, for it promised him freedom to pursue his studies in peace, and away from the world; and here, upon his retreat, the fates had flung a very substantial sample of that world which he sought to be rid of for a while.

For two whole days he revolved the painful matter in his mind, with the obvious result that when he awoke upon the third morning after the lady's advent, he was firmly

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resolved upon setting out that day in quest of new and uncontaminated quarters for his meditations.

His manner was scarcely genial when he apprised Mrs. Jones of his determination, but there are bounds even to the endurance of a curate, and there are times when a little warmth of expression may be justifiable in him.

His landlady was disconsolate, and a corner of her apron was called into requisition as an illustration of her grief and an ally to her protestations, but Andrew was obdurate.

"It was unkind of you, Mrs. Jones," he said, "to have done this. Moreover, it was injudicious and unbusinesslike—for seeing that there was every possibility of my remaining with you for the next year, I think that I might have been consulted before this er-ahem-lady"—and the saint's tones grew actually sarcastic over the word—"was admitted to the same house for a single month."

"I didn't know, sir, as you'd object!" whimpered the landlady.

The silent look which the curate bestowed upon her in reply contained more eloquence than could be found in all the orations of Cicero, and the manner in which he slammed the door after his departing self told of a resolve that no living thing could alter.

He walked down to the office of the bi-weekly, *Stollbridge Chronicle*, and, having handed in an advertisement, wherein he vain-gloriously announced himself as a young gentleman of quiet and studious habits, he set off at a brisk pace towards the river.

He hired a boat and was soon speeding up-stream, propelled by long sweeping strokes that belied the apparent frailty of his slender figure.

Having sculled himself into a perspiration and into a quiet backwater, he tied the painter to the trunk of a tree, and stretching himself in the bottom of the boat, he produced a calf-bound copy of Hyland's "Advanced Psychology," and was soon lost in its metaphysical depths to the world in general and the haunting idea of the yellow-haired actress in particular.

"Excuse me, sir," said a sweet, melodious voice, breaking in upon Andrew's studies and dragging him from the dry abstract into a very interesting study of the concrete, "but could you direct me to Stollbridge?"

The young man's head went half-way round his Roman collar, and his eyes opened very wide, the better to behold the charming apparition standing on the bank close by, in a half-timid, half-respectful attitude.

So ecstatic was his admiration that he forgot to answer her question until she repeated it, whereupon he blushed like a girl and removed his hat.

"I know a short cut," he replied, "but if you are unacquainted with the country, I should advise you to keep to the river."

"Thank you. Is it far?"

"About four miles."

The girl gave a little frightened gasp.

"Four miles," she echoed, "why it will be dusk before I get there. How annoying! This comes of exploring a country."

"Have you walked far?" he ventured timidly.

"Far!" she exclaimed, "I must have walked miles. I left Stollbridge at eleven this morning intending to visit Calvert Hall; I was told that there was a short cut across the fields which reduced the distance to two miles; I attempted to follow out the minute directions which I had received with the result that I lost myself hopelessly, and have been wandering about ever since."

"Dear me!" ejaculated Andrew, then added brilliantly, "You must be tired!"

"I should think I am," she answered; "wouldn't you be?"

Andrew confessed that such a contingency was probable, and then for a moment he pondered over something that had come into his mind. He noted that she was young, that she was very pretty, and very ladylike, both in dress and manners, and this observation troubled him not a little. Had she been elderly or unattractive, his duty would have been clear to him. As it was——

He brought his reasoning to an abrupt termination by offering timidly to take her back to Stollbridge in his boat.

She hesitated at first, looked demure, and spoke of troubling and of not knowing him, but ended by accepting his invitation.

Of course, it could not be expected that these two would travel over those four miles of tranquil river in silence. They chatted affably, and the girl even displayed a certain spirit of innocent badinage which played sad havoc with Andrew's nerves.

He noticed that her eyes were dark and large, and had a trick of opening wide at times like those of a puzzled child; that her hair was of a bright auburn; that her complexion was as delicate as that of a peach; that her mouth was small and sensitive; and that her figure, although *petite*, was well proportioned.

By the time they had travelled a mile, it occurred to the curate that there was no

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reason why he should fatigue himself by over-vigorous sculling. They would reach Stollbridge quite soon enough. Of course, he told himself that it was not of the least consequence *when* they arrived, but down in his heart of hearts he knew that he was not telling himself exactly the truth, for—well—she was very pretty, and fresh, and innocent, and he was very young.

"You are of course a visitor at Stollbridge?" he inquired presently, and he actually began to fear the conversational powers that he was displaying.

"Oh yes," she replied frankly, "I am only here for three or four weeks."

Andrew was burning to ask her how much of the three or four weeks might still be left, but he thought the question too bold, so, with a sigh, he stifled it and grew silent.

"Do you often come on the river?" the girl inquired after a pause.

"Almost every day, when it is fine."

"And do you often pity ladies who have lost their way and take them back to Stollbridge in your boat?"

"I?" he ejaculated in accents of the profoundest horror. "I—I assure you that I do not!"

"What a pity!" she answered archly.

Andrew felt uncomfortable as the suspicion arose in his mind that, despite his cloth, she was amusing herself at his expense, and he muttered something about not understanding why the circumstance should be a lamentable one.

"Excuse me, sir," said a sweet, melodious voice; "could you direct me to Stollbridge?"

It was not until he had assisted her out of the boat at Stollbridge that she made her meaning clear to him.

"If it were a regular practice of yours," she said, and her eyes had a mischievous look in them like those of a kitten at play, "I might be tempted soon to lose myself again, for I never enjoyed the river so much as this evening. I wonder why?"

Andrew blushed up to the roots of his hair, and deemed her innocent outspokeness very embarrassing. Then, for the first time in his life, he became guilty of a gallant speech.

"No more have I," he replied in a whisper—for his sanctity was afraid that the innocent-looking boatman might have ears like other people—"and if you should contrive to lose yourself again—well—I should be happy to find you."

He realised that he had expressed himself clumsily, and yet he felt that he ought rather to be ashamed of his boldness. But then, as I have said already, he was very young, and she was very sweet and she had very wonderful eyes. Those eyes haunted him as he walked home alone, and he told himself a dozen times that he was a churl for not having seen her to the door of her dwelling in spite of her remonstrances.

For the next four days it rained almost incessantly, which kept Andrew indoors. Moreover, he was busy packing his belongings, for he had found suitable rooms near at hand, and he was preparing to move into them; this he eventually did, on the fifth day after his adventure.

He came across the lady with the straw-coloured hair once or twice before he left his old quarters, and his eyes scarcely contained upon such occasions that sympathetic benevolence which is supposed to be characteristic of churchmen.

At last he was installed in his new rooms, unpolluted by the presence of any painted ballet girl—for thus he now defined her.

The next day was Sunday, and, as principle forbade him from boating on that day of pious indolence, he was out of humour. He was especially concerned at not seeing his fair unknown in church, and at a loss how to account for her absence.

But on the Monday, the weather being fine, he went out again and sculled himself into the same shady backwater by the old mill. Only he left his psychological volume behind

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him this time, and spent two solid hours watching the horizon and thinking of her lovely eyes. He was just beginning to despair, when suddenly the silence was broken by a voice, which, although he had heard it but once, was deeply graven on his memory.

"Please, sir, could you direct me to Stollbridge?"

He looked round to meet her laughing eyes, and laughing in return with pleasure and amusement, he rose, as on the former occasion, to hand her into the boat.

And so it fell out that every day at about the same hour the syren's voice would come to ask the saint to show her the way to Stollbridge, until one day matters grew so bad that the Rev. Andrew Barrington actually allowed it to escape him, that he should be delighted not only to take her as far as Stollbridge but a very considerable distance further.

As a matter of fact Andrew was in love and out of his senses, as a good many more young men have been, when too constantly thrown into the company of an attractive morsel of unchaperoned femininity.

And who can blame him? He was an idealist, and here, in Miss Ellaline de Vaud —for so she had told him that she was named —he had found the incarnation of his ideal.

She was too innocent to understand the curate's gentle metaphor about a longer journey than that to Stollbridge, so she merely smiled, and, taking him literally, told him that if he liked he might scull her up-stream as far as Widenham. And he had not the courage at the moment to put his metaphor into plainer language.

All this went on for the better part of a fortnight (during which the curate's studies and meditations were severely neglected) until at last the vicar, who was an intimate, although somewhat paternal friend of Andrew's, thought fit to administer a gentle remonstance.

But Andrew flew as near a temper as his sanctity—rather rusty of late—would allow, and he told the vicar in plain and very much unvarnished language that he was quite old enough to choose his own companions.

"Yes, yes," replied the vicar, absorbing some of the heat which Andrew was giving out "but it isn't *that*! A certain amount of example is expected from us, you know, and —well—you go out boating every day by yourself and come back accompanied, and—of course people are beginning to talk, which is very distressing!"

For a moment Andrew's sanctity deserted him wholly and the Evil One took possession of his heart, for bringing his fist down upon the table with unmistakable vehemence, he very roundly told the vicar that *people* might go to the devil.

The vicar's face was as interesting as a kaleidoscope at this unexpected rejoinder, and the tone in which he pointed out to Andrew that it was the earthly mission of the clergy to direct people in quite the opposite direction savoured strongly of pity.

Then he took up his hat and umbrella and with a sorrowful shake of the head, he sighingly wished Andrew good day and left him.

The saint was furious.

"How dare the insidious world talk of me and my movements?" he asked himself indignantly. "And to think that even so right-minded a man as the vicar should be affected by what he heard!"

If he had been a man of the world, Andrew might have been justified in competing for a prominent place in the history of profane utterance—as it was, he could only do some remarkably strong thinking. The result was that half-an-hour later he was tearing down towards the river with a speed born of righteous indignation, and a burning desire to set matters right once and for all time.

Yes; it was the only thing to do. He was fortunately the possessor of a nice private income which would allow him to live in blissful independence, and he was determined upon asking Miss de Vaud to take him and his money to church, and marry the lot.

He found her, sitting on the grass, and looking demure in a white dress and a sailor hat—Madonna-like he thought her.

With an original comment upon the heat of the sun and the clearness of the sky, he assisted her into the boat—she accomplishing the embarkation with the orthodox display of ankle—and arranged her cushions with something more than his wonted solicitude.

Then, taking the oars again, he pulled vigorously away in the direction of Widenham. He had in his mind a certain picturesque bower formed by the overhanging boughs of a beech tree, and beneath the generous shade of this, it was his purpose to call a halt and broach the delicate subject. He could do nothing but think of what he should say—and never did a sermon give him half the trouble and anxiety—so that naturally he was strangely silent and preoccupied.

She endured this for a while; but when she had asked him for the third time whether he felt the heat, and he had answered her with a

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fatuous smile that he thought them very charming indeed, she deemed it time to awaken him. So giving the right rope a vicious tug, she skilfully steered him into a hawthorn bush, which, if not in bloom, was very amply *in thorn*—a circumstance which he appreciated without the aid of his eyes.

As he pushed the boat back, he remarked with a sweet smile, which made his scratches bleed, that it did not signify in the least. Then a bold idea entered his mind—evoked by memories of a novel or two read in those sinful days of his boyhood—and in words which if slightly lacking in veracity, were certainly rich in poetry and fervour, he protested that for her sake he would gladly shed every drop of blood in his veins. In fact, he almost appeared to suggest that blood had been given him for no other purpose.

She blushed in the most highly approved fashion, and applied herself to a careful study of her tan shoes. Noticing this favourable sign, and finding the ice fairly broken, Andrew left the nose of the boat in the hawthorn bush where it had caught, forgot the bower half a mile further up the river, and started forthwith upon the accelerated display of amorous rhetoric.

Pale and gasping, with thumping heart and twitching hands he told his story; now halting and stammering, now plunging headlong into a torrent of verbiage and incoherence.

And she, while contemplating the pattern of her dainty shoe, dimly realised that he was asking her to become his wife. And having guessed, her heart began to beat. Not so much out of sympathy as out of dread lest he should capsize the boat before he had finished.

At last he stopped, and signified by mopping the perspiration from his forehead and the blood from his cheeks, that he had finished.

A crafty and designing woman of the world, would no doubt have commented upon the suddeness of the proposal. The simple unsophisticated child before him did otherwise. Raising for a moment her soft dark eyes, and favouring him with a glance half coy half tender—

"I am so happy, Andrew," she murmured, "so happy!"

The enraptured lover would have fallen upon his knees had he not remembered in time the disastrous results which might follow upon so rash an act. He had to content himself with stretching across the boat and seizing the hand she half extended towards him.

"You love me? You really love me?" the poor boy whispered incredulously.

"More than I can tell you," she answered, casting down her eyes.

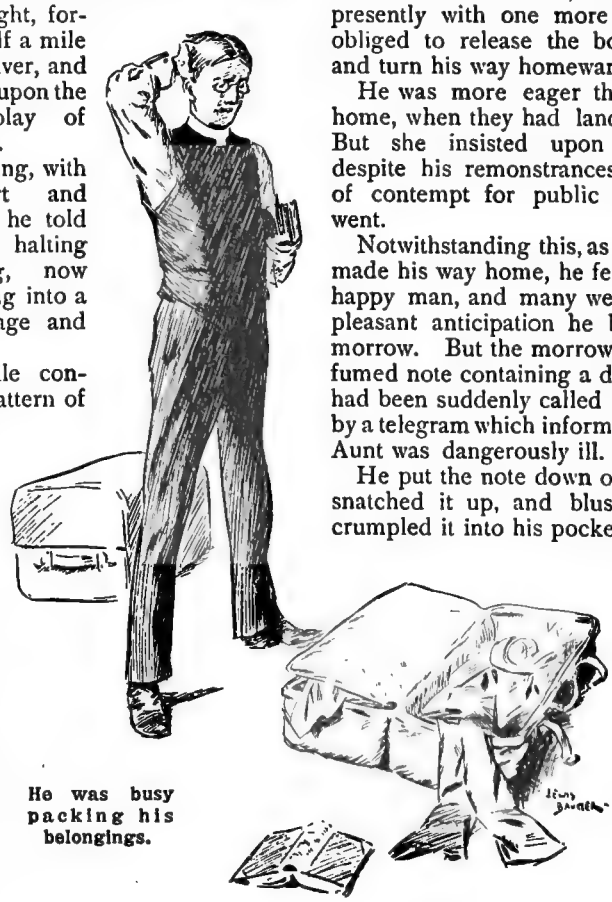
Upon this followed many touching words, many sighs and many impassioned glances. But the sun *will* set, in spite of lovers, and presently with one more sigh, Andrew was obliged to release the boat from the bush and turn his way homewards.

He was more eager than ever to see her home, when they had landed at Stollbridge. But she insisted upon going alone, and despite his remonstrances and expressions of contempt for public opinion, alone she went.

Notwithstanding this, as Andrew Barrington made his way home, he felt himself indeed a happy man, and many were the thoughts of pleasant anticipation he bestowed upon the morrow. But the morrow brought him a perfumed note containing a disappointment. She had been suddenly called to town, she wrote, by a telegram which informed her that her dear Aunt was dangerously ill. Would he write?

He put the note down on the table. Then snatched it up, and blushing furiously he crumpled it into his pocket as the maid-of-all work entered with his breakfast tray.

He felt better when she had gone and began to think. He drew her note from his pocket and read it again. At the word "Aunt" he came to a full stop. It suggested a



He was busy packing his belongings.

Giving the right rope a vicious tug, she skilfully steered him into a hawthorn bush.

family. And with the suggestion came a sickening dread that her people—whoever they might be—should oppose their union. The anxiety was too awful to be borne. He must do something. Again his eye fell upon the note. "Will you write?" Yes, he would write at once. He got the necessary materials together, and, sitting down, he pondered deeply for perhaps half an hour. At last with a sigh he took up the pen and began. He worked assiduously for an hour, and the contents of his waste paper basket grew steadily during that time. But in the end his critical spirit was satisfied, and he appended his signature to one of the most richly tinted flowers of rhetoric that ever bloomed between the leaves of a parson's blotting-pad. What he had written might have been summed up concisely into three sentences: "I love you. I shall never love anyone else. If your parents forbid our marriage I shall be disconsolate."

But, as everyone versed in such matters must know, these three sentences afford very considerable scope for elaboration. It need not, therefore, cause great surprise that by a zealous regard for detail, Andrew was enabled to cover eight pages of notepaper with closely-written matter. Although there may be many who could do better, still, for a saint, Andrew did very well.

The reply came promptly, and set him in a fever of delight. She had no parents, and therefore no wishes but her own to consult. Her Aunt was better, and she hoped to return to Stollbridge in a day or two. She loved him, and she trusted that he was devoting a little of his thoughts to her. Then came the signature "Ella"—a name which Andrew kept uttering aloud, until the maid-of-all-work disgusted him into silence by putting her head into the room and inquiring whether he had called her.

Ella would return in a day or two! And here again those novels read in early youth came to his aid, and he remembered what was expected of him. He had no time to lose, he must run up to town at once and buy the ring.

He put his hat on—a trifle jauntily for a saint—and went round to the vicarage to obtain his superior's sanction of the journey.

He had not seen the vicar since their somewhat unhappy parting of some three days ago, and it was not without a certain restlessness of mind that he entered the presence of that worthy man.

The Reverend Mr. Ritson turned from the papers with which he had been occupied, to greet Andrew.

He was a man of medium height, with iron-grey hair and a rosy clean-shaven face. The levity suggested by a slight upward tilt of his nose was redeemed by the portly dignity of his figure.

"Ah, good morning, Andrew. Won't you sit down?"

Andrew sat down and dangled his hat between his knees in a nervous fashion.

"I have come to ask you whether it would

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be inconvenient if I were to run up to town for a day or two."

"Certainly not," the vicar answered with a kindly smile. "Go by all means if you——"

Mr. Ritson stopped abruptly, and the smile died from his good-humoured lips. He suddenly remembered having learnt that Miss de Vaud had left Stollbridge two days ago. He was a man of some insight and some worldly experience, and the conclusion he arrived at by a simple process of deduction, was not flattering to Andrew. He turned his clear hazel eyes sternly upon the young man.

"Might I inquire," he said coldly, "what your motives are for going to London?"

"I was about to tell you, sir."

"Oh!" The vicar concluded from this disposition to confess, that his apprehensions were certainly unfounded, and he hastened to relax the rigorous position of his facial muscles, being anxious to make up in kindness to Andrew for the slight his imagination had for a moment cast upon the young man.

"You see, Mr. Ritson, I was twenty-four years of age last birthday. And—and—I have been thinking of getting married."

The vicar raised his eyebrows in surprise, and passing his hands under his coat tails, smiled again.

"You are thinking of marrying! Ah, well, well—a very praiseworthy resolution."

Being a bachelor, the vicar was in a position to make an assertion of this character without any qualms regarding its veracity.

Andrew gathered courage from the words, and explained the motive of his visit to London.

"Of course, of course," the vicar agreed, "but you haven't said anything about the lady of your choice, yet. Come, what is she like? One of my parishioners?"

Andrew remembered their last conversation, and grew distinctly nervous.

"I think you know her, sir," he answered, "I had the misfortune to disagree with you the other day, about the conversational topic I was affording Stollbridge. I have decided to set matters right by marrying Miss de Vaud, whom I very dearly—for whom I have a very deep regard."

The vicar did not say much. But what he did say was pregnant with meaning of an eminently discourteous and even sinister character.

"But—but," stammered Andrew, "I don't understand."

"Great Heavens, sir," Mr. Ritson interrupted. "Have you taken leave of your senses, or has this woman ensnared you into—"

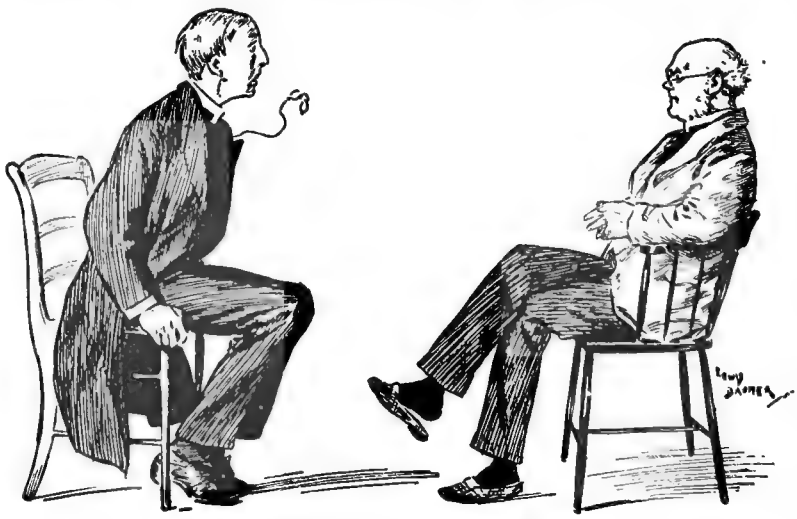
"Sir!" cried Andrew, rising indignant, and confronting him.

The vicar looked at him for a moment, then shook his head sorrowfully.

"So? It's so bad as all that, is it?" he murmured. "Well, well, I'm sorry for you Andrew—you are a young man of great promise. But—think it over; think it over carefully, and come to me again."

"My mind is quite made up, sir."

"Yes, but it may change. I hope it will, for although it would give me very great pain, you will understand that if you persist in your mad intention of marrying an actress—"



"Marrying a WHAT?" ejaculated Andrew.

"Marrying a WHAT?" ejaculated Andrew.

"An actress, I said."

Andrew laughed curiously.

"There is some misunderstanding, I didn't mention an actress."

He uttered the word "actress," as if it were an improper expression which contaminated his saintly tongue.

Mr. Ritson gazed at the young man in undisguised amazement, and

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began to entertain a very deep concern anent his sanity.

"Did you, or did you not say that you were going to marry Miss de Vaud; Miss Ellaline de Vaud; to make myself plainer still—the Miss Ellaline de Vaud with whom you have been philandering on the river, much to every right-minded person's disgust?"

Andrew might have taken objection at another time to the impropriety of the word "*philandering*." But the season was inopportune for any subtle diagnosis of English vocables. He merely allowed his parched lips to murmur an assent.

"Well then—" the vicar stopped abruptly, as new light broke in upon his mind.

"Do you mean to tell me that you did not know she was an actress? That she was the very woman on whose account you changed your rooms?"

Andrew gasped beneath the load of this revelation. He glanced wildly about him, and out through the window. Someone passing at that moment riveted his attention. Springing across the room, he drew aside the curtains.

"Who's that?" he asked excitedly.

The vicar looked out and beheld a woman crossing the road. She wore a gown of prismatic hues and her hair was of a golden yellow.

"That, I believe," he answered slowly, "is Miss de Vaud's maid, or dresser, or whatever they call such creatures."

"It is the woman I fled from—I understand it all now." And dropping into a chair, Andrew mopped his face.

Mr. Ritson laid his hand kindly upon the young man's shoulder, and sought to console him.

"Fortunately there is no real harm done, Andrew," he said presently. "I suppose you have not written to her?"

"Oh, but I *have*," cried Andrew wringing his hands. "And *such* a letter."

"Good Heavens, man! Oh, Andrew, how could you? Think—think of the disgrace to the cloth if this designing woman drags you into a breach of promise action!"

Andrew groaned, and the vicar — being unable to think of anything more appropriate— groaned to keep him company.

* * * *

A week went by without any fresh developments, saving the departure of the maid, which, the vicar contended, was a sign that Miss de Vaud was not returning to Stollbridge. Andrew received two letters from her. The first was a passionate appeal to his affections and a gentle chiding for his silence. He almost wept over it—and had not the vicar intervened in time, he might have gone the length of answering it.

The second one, which came four days later, was somewhat abusive, and contained a veiled menace. Andrew wept no more—he perspired.

Then another week followed, during which the poor, errant saint lived day and night in a torture of apprehension.

His health was threatening to give way when at last the gods saw fit to turn their thumbs up, and his suspense was ended.

The vicar was the first to bring him the joyful and unexpected tidings that Miss de Vaud was Miss de Vaud no longer. She was married. Yes there was no doubt about it. Andrew read the announcement himself in the *Telegraph*, and the brief sketch of her career which was now supposed to have terminated.

He was able to smile, and to feel very thankful at his escape. The same day a letter bearing the London post-mark and in a familiar hand-writing was delivered to him.

It ran:—

> You will no doubt have learnt before this reaches you of the marriage of that woman for whom you professed such deep and lasting affection, and whom you were horrified afterwards to learn—as I gather from your silence—was nothing more than a designing, wicked actress. I am sorry if I have wounded your vanity or your heart, but I could not withstand the temptation of testing the mettle of the young curate who fled in pious horror from under the roof which had the misfortune to shelter an actress. I hope that I have succeeded in proving to you at least that the horror you felt was only inspired by a word, and that after all an actress may still be sufficiently a woman to cause even a saint to come down from his pedestal and woo her.

She concluded by informing him that she had told her husband everything there was to tell concerning their "flirtation"—he gnashed his teeth at the word—and she enclosed the passionate letter which he had written her and for which she had no further use.

He had not the courage to read his own letter over again. But he took the immediate precaution of burning the two epistles in the same fire.

He has since become an ardent advocate of the celibacy of the clergy, and a trite aphorism which he is never tired of uttering is that appearances are extremely deceptive.

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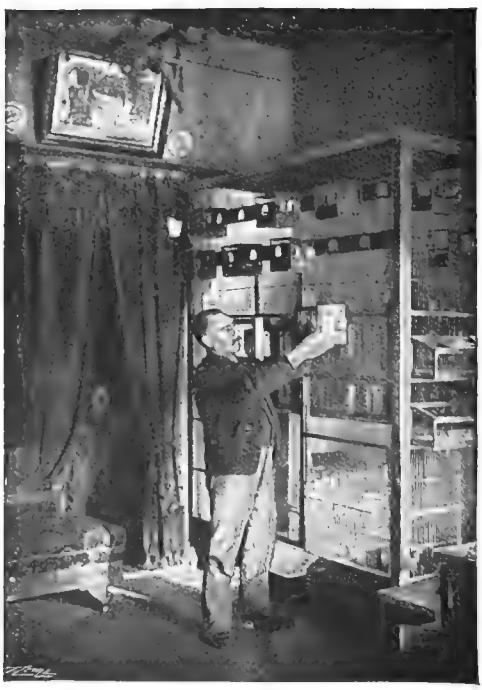
A Singing School for Canaries

By Margaret Collinson.

The nightingale is the prima donna, the acknowledged Patti, of birdland; but, being both eccentric and wilful, she loves her freedom even better than the applause of the multitude. If this were otherwise, if the nightingale resigned herself to captivity, it is to be feared that the popular favourite—I mean, of course, the canary—would have, with the best grace, to take a back seat, despite her elegance and fine feathers, intelligence and industry. For there is not the slightest doubt about it—she is merely talented, and the nightingale has genius. But it is wonderful what intelligence and industry will do, and these, as I have said, are qualities peculiar to the canary. Like the untutored but gifted aspirant to operatic honours, all a canary needs is a clever and experienced singing master, careful treatment, and peculiar diet, to mould her somewhat thin and over-shrill tones into the rich and variously modulated song which is a delight to thousands.

There are many singing schools for canaries, and about the most remarkable is that of a certain Herr Adolf Wolfschlag. Herr Wolfschlag, described as a funny little German, whose voice, from living so long among his birds, sounds like the trill of a canary, is a native of the Hartz Mountains—a district where the culture of canaries has become almost an industry. His method of teaching the birds is decidedly original. It is done by means of a peculiar music machine, his own special invention. This extraordinary apparatus is worked by water and air force. It is cylindrical in shape, and comprises an air tank. The pressure of the water forces the air through a number of variously-sized pipes which are contained within the cylinder, and in this way a soft and peculiarly sweet chorus of sounds is produced, resembling the ideal trills of a trained canary. It has nine variations, just as the canary has nine different tones, and it is always possible to vary to any extent the pressure of the water in



The preparatory school.

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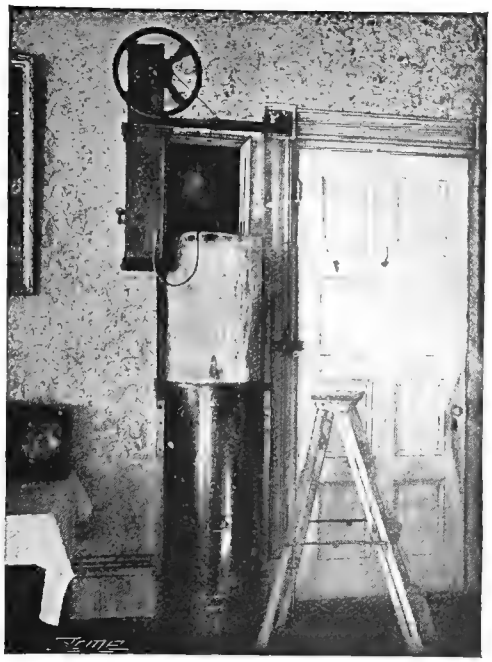
order to modulate the sounds.

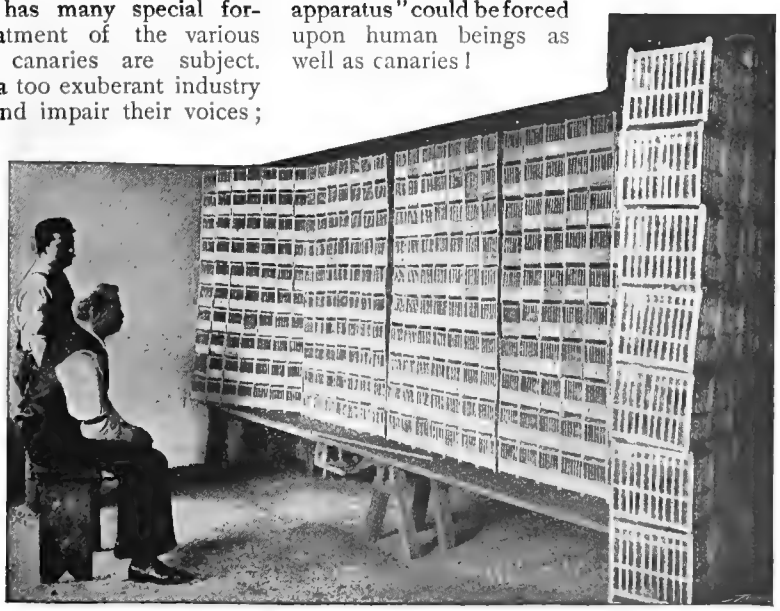
Above this singing academy is the preparatory school — a school which has about two hundred students, whose "years" are as yet too tender for the serious study and strenuous practice of the academy proper. Their captivity is made as homelike and comfortable as possible; and, when breeding time comes round, a number of nests made of plaster of paris and wire are placed in the cages, and a quantity of sea-grass scattered about. This the birds soon discover, and turn to good account by building soft and cosy nests in the plaster of paris moulds. As soon as they are fit to begin lessons they are taken downstairs, and it is remarkable to hear them tune their voices the moment the machine is set going.



The apparatus with which the canaries are taught to sing.

Herr Wolfschlag has many special formulas for the treatment of the various ailments to which canaries are subject. Draughts, cold, and a too exuberant industry injure their throats and impair their voices; and then the doctor steps in and administers honey and a little fat bacon. Herr Wolfschlag, like other canary experts, is wonderfully skilled in testing a bird's voice—so skilled, indeed, that he can distinguish and judge one bird's notes even when hundreds of others are trilling and warbling around it.

It is imperative that a canary, if it wishes to get on in its profession, should lead a moderate and respectable life. We all of us love good fare and our dinner; let us therefore not blame the canary for being partial to canary seed in unlimited quantities. Alas! canary seed induces corpulence, and corpulence ruins the voice; so the poor bird is forced to live on hard-boiled eggs chopped up fine and mixed with hemp. And then—I record it with sorrow—the canary loves its glass, and it is necessary that the bird should drink in moderation. The wily Herr Wolfschlag knows his pupils too well to put temptation in their way and trust them to overcome it. He makes use of an ingenious apparatus which allows them only a certain quantity of drink. Ah! if only an "ingenious apparatus" could be forced upon human beings as well as canaries!



An expert can judge one bird's note when hundreds of others are warbling around it.

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By

W. Alexander Ross.

I.

The man whose stringy-bark gunyah was on the other side of Wirraboo Gully—which is eight miles from the township of Benskin, New South Wales—gave his axe a last swing in the air, and brought it down with a thud into the iron-bark log out of which he had been breaking sleepers all the afternoon. Its polished blade sank deep into the tough, red, splintery wood, and he relaxed his hold.

"I reckon that's about the last I shall break out on Wirraboo Gully for many a day," he remarked, as he pushed his bushy black hair back from his damp forehead.

Then he tramped over the undergrowth down the uneven slope of the gully across to the bark-built humpy on the other side, and, having filled his billy-can and hung it over the fire, he sat down on a big ironwood log in front of the gunyah, and brought out a crumpled and much creased copy of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which he had brought over from Benskin, whither he had been, two days before to replenish his stock of tobacco, and lay in a fresh supply of the indifferent methylated spirit, labelled whisky, and consumed as such in the Bush.

He had read the column he turned to quite a hundred times before. He knew it by heart in fact—but he read it once more while he waited for the billy-can to boil. And yet it was only a glowing account of the prospects of the then newly discovered goldfields on the South African Rand.

He stroked his ragged coal-black beard while he read, and his black eyes gathered an expression of intense determination in their sullen depths.

"I'll go," he said aloud. "I'm sick of Wirraboo Gully, and yet—" he paused and looked across to where the Wirraboo Hills lay swathed in a lovely blue mist. "There is room to breathe here."

The billy-can boiled over, and the hiss of the water in the fire roused him.

"Hang it! I'll go—I can come back," he said again as he went into the gunyah to fetch his tea-canister.

The full April moon had risen hours, and the purple and silver of the coming dawn were lighting up the sky beyond the tall gaunt gum trees when the man who lived in the

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bark hut on Wirraboo Gully turned into his bunk. He had read the *Herald* account of the Rand gold discoveries quite a dozen times since his billy-can had boiled over, while the brief Australian twilight was giving place to the lovely southern night.

"I'll go," he said once more as he rolled himself in his rug. "I can come back when I get sick of it."

The faint echo of a dingo howling far away on the Wirraboo Hills came floating dismally through the late summer night as the bushman spoke, and the next moment the weird laughter of the jackasses in the blue gum trees rang out in mocking reply to the howling dingo—or perhaps it was to the dweller in the gunyah below who had spoken of returning.

Late on the following afternoon the man who lived at Wirraboo Gully stepped off the verandah of the hotel in Benskin, and swung himself up to the box-seat of Dobson's coach.

"Coming back, I reckon?" said Bill Jupe the hotel-keeper.

"Just as likely," was the laconic reply as the speaker jammed some more tobacco into his pipe. And the coach started.

"A rum cuss," remarked a swagsman who was standing with the other loungers outside the hotel.

"Yes, Mowbray is a rum cuss. But he's lived on the Wirraboo Gully for seven years, and he's a 'white' man," returned the hotel-keeper.

"Yes, Mowbray is a 'white' man," assented the man who kept Benskin's only store. "If he ain't, I'm jiggered if ever I saw one. What's yours?"

The company adjourned to the bar of the hotel for drinks, while the coach disappeared far down the hot road in a cloud of dust.

II.

It was late in the London season. There was a big crowd at Mrs. Maitland-Bethune's ball.

"Who is that lanky chap with the brigand's moustache and bronze face—over there, talking to that girl with red gold hair and dressed in peacock blue?" asked a man who was leaning up against a wall and watching the crowd. His companion turned to him in surprise.

"What, you don't know! Of course, I forgot that you have been potting at hillmen on the North-west frontier for the last three years. That is Mowbray, the South African gold king and diamond emperor and all that—a fellow who has spent one-half his life picking up nuggets as big as bricks and Koh-i-noors in South Africa, and now has come to England to find somebody to wear the diamonds and dissipate the gold."

"May I add these to my congratulations?" said Mowbray.

"He won't find that difficult," returned the man who had been potting hillmen on the North-west frontier. There was a touch of bitterness in his tone. He was a younger son with little beyond his pay and the Victoria Cross.

The other man laughed quietly.

"He does. The girl with the red-gold hair is his divinity, and he has been hunting her down like a sleuth-hound for the last two seasons, without success."

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"A beautiful woman, and proof against gold and precious stones in abundance—marvellous!" remarked the cynic who possessed a Victoria cross.

"He won't hunt in vain a third season. Lady Millicent's father, old Clewthorne, you know, came a buster over the Ascot Cup yesterday. They say it will clean him out."

Nobody would have recognised in the John Mowbray who was standing beside Lady Millicent, daughter of the Marquis of Clewthorne, the bushman whom they called Mowbray in New South Wales, and who used to live on the Wirraboo Gully. The ragged, black beard was gone, and two years in England, besides three on the Rand in South Africa, had changed him wonderfully. There was a certain air of distinction about him, and his slow manner of speech gave him time to think while he spoke—which was a useful thing for the man who used to cut timber in New South Wales.

At Wirraboo they had called him a "white man." On the Rand they said he had grit as well as luck. In Throgmorton Street they said he was straight. And they all meant the same thing. Perhaps that was why the taciturn ex-bushman was liked in a way, and was received in certain society circles which some people would have regarded as being fairly exclusive.

The Blue Hungarians broke into the symphony of one of Waldteufel's dreamiest waltzes.

"I am a clumsy dancer," said Mowbray to Lady Millicent. Perhaps I oughtn't to have put my name on your programme. Shall we sit it out?"

The beauty with the red-gold hair shrugged her handsome shoulders in careless acquiescence, and they drifted into the conservatory, where the air was cooler and the lights were soft and dim, and where the murky London moonlight seemed pure and white, as it crept through the panes and fell in faint silvery blotches on the marble floor.

Mowbray felt freer and more at ease there. It was a long time before he spoke. Lady Millicent did not mind; she used her fan with an easy grace that betokened the most perfect serenity of mind.

"I don't dance, and I seldom talk," he said at last; "I daresay you wonder why I am boring you."

"Are you boring me?" she asked slowly.

Mowbray smiled a little sardonically. He was beginning to understand the ways of the world he was living in.

"I think so," he said.

He watched her fan as it rose and fell in a graceful curve.

"It is past midnight, and it is the morning of your birthday. I wanted to be the first to congratulate you," he said, as he brought out a morocco case. He touched the spring; the lid flew up, and disclosed a butterfly set with magnificent brilliants. Even in that dim light it blazed and scintillated like living fire.

"May I add this to my congratulations?"

The fan closed with a graceful snap.

"You may," she said, after a pause. "You are too good."

There was a look of triumph on the face of the man from Wirraboo when he entered the ball-room again, with Lady Millicent on his arm. The diamond butterfly was sparkling in her hair.

The engagement between Lady Millicent and Mowbray was in the next day's papers, and three months later there was a column of marriage ceremony, guests, wedding presents, and trousseau. The luxuriance of the adjectives applied to the diamonds which were the gift of the bridegroom to the bride was appalling.

III.

John Mowbray was waiting in the library of the house they had taken in Curzon Street on their return from the honeymoon, pending the completion of negotiations for a mansion in Piccadilly. He was waiting to start with his wife for Mrs. Maitland-Bethune's.

Mowbray had been obliged to go a lot into society since his marriage. He had become even more taciturn than he was before marriage, and the part he played in society was that of the looker-on. And he saw more than pleased him. There was an ugly glint in his eyes as he waited for his wife.

Presently there was a frou-frou of silk, and Lady Millicent swept into the room—a vision of radiant beauty, whose jewels were worth a king's ransom.

"Is it Mrs. Maitland-Bethune's to-night?" he asked.

"Of course," was the careless reply.

"I suppose young Paget will be there?"

"It is extremely possible that the Honourable Reginald Paget will be there." There was a touch of hauteur in the lady's voice.

"He generally does turn up where you are," said Mowbray knitting his black brows. "I don't object to your receiving the homage from other men, which it seems to be the custom to pay to other men's wives in your world. But there is just a bit too much of

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it from the Honourable Reginald for my liking. I want you to pull him up a bit."

Lady Millicent's lips smiled icily; but there was a vicious flash in her eyes.

"I am afraid you want me to be impossible."

"Exactly—as far as young Paget is concerned. I want you to save him from making a fool of himself. That's all."

He strode to the door as he spoke, and opened it. His wife vouchsafed him neither word nor look in response to his appeal. They drove in silence to Mrs. Maitland-Bethune's.

Mowbray did what was a very unusual thing with him, when he entered the ballroom. He asked Lady Millicent to allow him to put his name down on her programme. She raised her eyebrows in surprise as she handed it to him. He placed his initials opposite the last waltz but one, and then lounged about all the evening.

Lady Millicent danced three times with the Honourable Reginald.

Lady Millicent danced three times with the honourable Reginald, and then sat a fourth out with him.

There was a flash of defiance in her violet eyes when her husband came to claim his dance. He quietly suggested that they should sit it out. They drifted into the conservatory as they did that night when she had accepted the diamond butterfly—and Mowbray.

He gave a sigh of relief as he dropped into a huge cane chair. The sound of the dripping water in the fountain basins, the scent of the flowers, the fantastic shadows the great palms and tropical plants threw on the marble floor, all brought back to him the bush round Wirraboo. He saw it sleeping, swathed in all the wonderful radiance of the Australian night. And he sighed again.

"I am sorry you did not take my advice about Paget," he said presently.

"Why?" asked the woman, with an air of indifference.

"For your sake—that's all."

"How good of you," was the calm reply.

"You do not intend to take it then?" said Mowbray slowly.

Lady Millicent's fan shut with a snap.

"I do not intend to do anything absurd. Your advice is an insult."

"Ah!" ejaculated Mowbray. "I thought you would misunderstand it. We have been married three months. They have not been exactly comfortable, have they?"

Lady Millicent yawned ostentatiously.

"You are bored," continued Mowbray. "Well, money and beauty don't always hit it, I suppose. At any rate, we haven't, have we?"

"You are charmingly considerate to choose such a time for complimentary confession. Pray go on—that waltz will last quite three minutes yet."

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Mowbray looked at her curiously for a few seconds. A memory of the dingoes howling on the Wiraboo Hills came back to him, and he heard the laughing jackass's discordant mirth among the branches of the giant blackbutts round the Gully.

"We can tell a lot of truth in three minutes," he said. "Let us be quite straight with each other—for three minutes. You intend to go your own way, whatever I may say or do?"

"Since you put it so frankly—well, yes, I do."

"Ah!" said Mowbray. "Then the 'love, honour, and obey,' and all that doesn't count with you."

Lady Millicent laughed satirically.

"I didn't compile the marriage service—you can hardly expect me to be responsible for all its absurdities."

"Then there isn't any 'love, honour, and obey' absurdity between us?"

He spoke in calm, even tones, but the contempt in his voice stung her into fury—and the truth. She turned to him with flashing eyes.

"No! I tolerate you. That is all. I have never done anything else. I shall never do anything else."

"I'm sorry," said Mowbray. "I'm sorry—for your sake. That's all. I suppose you wouldn't be offended if I died—or something of that sort?"

He stood up and offered her his arm.

"Shall we go back to the ball-room? The band has stopped, and I have not the honour of figuring twice on your programme."

"I had better say good-bye," he said to her, at the foot of the stairs when they had returned to Curzon Street. "Urgent matters will call me back to South Africa at once. I shall be leaving too early to say good-bye in the morning."

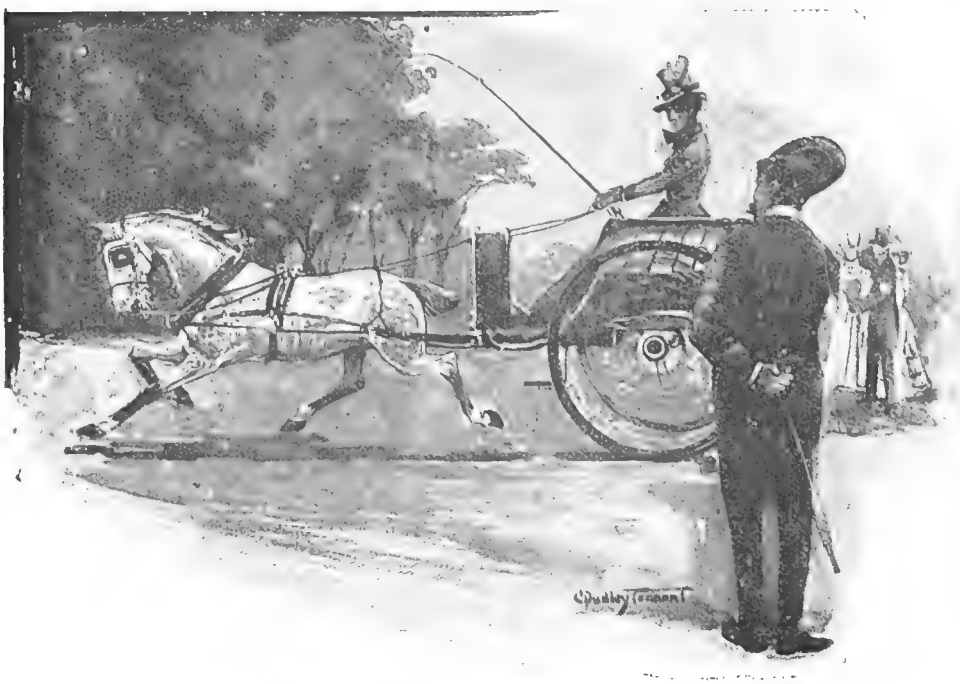
He held out his hand.

Lady Millicent ignored it.

"Really! Good-bye, and *bon voyage*."

Mowbray stood and watched as she swept up the stairs with the air of a queen. He lit a cigar when she disappeared, and laughed in a mirthless way as he turned into the library.

He was very busy in the City the next day. He saw his lawyers. He paid his brokers a visit, and gave them instructions about his securities which dumbfounded them. He looked in at the people who had in hand the negotiations for the house in Piccadilly, and late in the afternoon called at his bankers



He raised his hat, and she saw him turn away.

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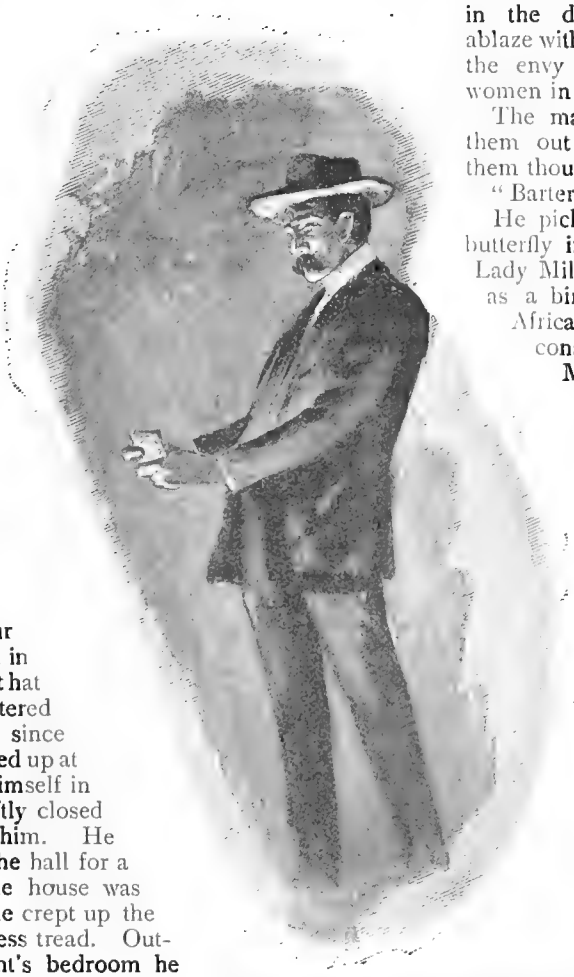
and saw the manager. A little later Lady Millicent saw him leaning on the rails as she was driving in the Row. Their eyes met. He raised his hat, and she saw him turn away.

She had a surprise when she reached home. A bulky letter from her husband's solicitors was awaiting her. Its contents were startling—it contained her husband's will. She was left everything that John Mowbray had.

She read it with amazement, and when she put it down, his words in the conservatory at Mrs. Maitland-Bethune's came back to her with sinister significance,—"I suppose you wouldn't be offended if I died—or something of that sort." And she sat lost in thought.

It was long after midnight of the next day. The lights in the house in Curzon Street had been out for an hour or more when a man in serge suit and a soft hat—who had sauntered past once or twice since midnight and glanced up at the windows—let himself in with a key and softly closed the door behind him. He stood listening in the hall for a few minutes. The house was still as a grave. He crept up the stairs with a noiseless tread. Outside Lady Millicent's bedroom he paused and listened again, before he passed on to the door of her dressing room. Cautiously and silently he opened it and entered. The room was bright with the full moon that was streaming in at the windows. He picked up the trinkets which lay sparkling on the dressing table. A grim smile lit up his stern set face as he looked at them.

Presently he tried the door of the jewel safe. It was locked. He pulled thoughtfully at his moustache for a few seconds, and then crept slowly through the open door into Lady Millicent's bedroom. It did not take him long to find what he wanted—a tiny bunch of keys that lay on a table beside the bed. He stood with them in his hand and looked at the woman who slept on all unconscious of his presence. She stirred in her sleep and the intruder was gone like a shadow.



He picked up the exquisite butterfly in diamonds.

A few minutes later the table in the dressing room was ablaze with the jewels that were the envy of all the society women in London.

The man who had spread them out stood looking at them thoughtfully.

"Barter!" he muttered.

He picked up the exquisite butterfly in diamonds, which Lady Millicent had accepted as a birthday gift from the African Gold King in the conservatory at Mrs. Maitland-Bethune's. He shook his head slowly, and put it down.

A few hours later the evening papers were full of the robbery of Lady Millicent's jewels. The whole of the magnificent collection which Mowbray had lavished upon her had been taken, but only those. Her own jewels and the diamond butterfly, which had been Mowbray's gift on her birthday, had been left untouched. The same papers stated that Mr. John Mowbray's name appeared among those on the list of passengers by the mail boat which had started the previous afternoon to the Cape from Plymouth.

Lady Millicent fretted and fumed at the loss of her jewels, and at the awkwardness of not being able to communicate with her husband.

A month later she fumed still more when

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she received an intimation from her bankers that her account was overdrawn. But that was only the beginning. Enquiries elicited the startling fact that her husband's account was closed. An urgent telegram to the Cape brought back the still more startling fact that John Mowbray had not reached there. He had not travelled by the boat on which he had booked his passage.

Private detectives, detectives from Scotland Yard were called in. The cables to all the ends of the earth were set to work with enquiries for John Mowbray; but neither detectives nor cables brought any news of him.

He had vanished utterly and wholly.

Every week that passed brought some fresh and unpleasant discovery for Lady Millicent. Not only had the man disappeared, but his wealth had gone with him. He had realised everything. All that could be learned was that when he disappeared he must have had in his possession an enormous sum in Bank of England notes. But never a single note came back to the bank to give a clue to the whereabouts of John Mowbray. The end of the season came, and Lady Millicent found herself homeless, and practically penniless. The papers romanced upon the disappearance of John Mowbray, while every day there appeared in their agony columns a distracted appeal from Lady Millicent to him to return.

She knew now who had taken her jewels, and why the diamond butterfly had been left. She knew now who had placed it on her pillow while she slept, the night the rest of the jewels were taken. She understood also the bitter irony of the will that left her possessor of all John Mowbray's wealth, and why he had said he was sorry for her sake when she told him that she only tolerated him.

The weeks grew to months, and the months to years, but John Mowbray remained undiscovered. They found it was impossible to trace his past further back than South Africa. And presently the world forgot that he had disappeared.

IV.

There was the usual group of loungers on the verandah of the hotel in Benskin one afternoon, when Dobson's coach came in. One passenger only clambered down from the box. He was bearded, dust-stained and grimy. Bill Jupe, grown a little grayer in five years, stared at the new-comer.

"I'm blowed if it ain't Mowbray, who used to live on Wirraboo Gully."

"Mowbray it is. I've come back to break out timber again on Wirraboo Gully."

"Then you ain't had blazing good luck."

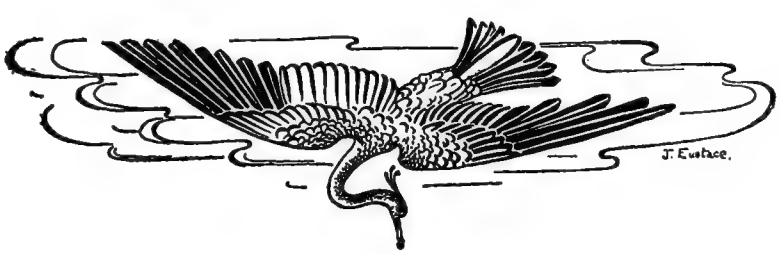
Mowbray laughed sardonically.

"No, I haven't." And turning to the crowd he said, "What's yours?"

And they adjourned to the bar for drinks. And that was how John Mowbray came back to Wirraboo—for good.

Sometimes when the Bush is sleeping, and the soft Australian night has wrapped it in a lovely canopy of silver and grey, the man who lives in the gunyah on Wirraboo Gully brings out from its hiding-place a box that is filled with jewels that once adorned Lady Millicent. And as he turns them about in the moonlight, and watches the dancing fires prisoned within the glorious gems, he laughs long and loud as he thinks of the haughty and now humbled beauty who vainly waits and waits for his return in far away England.

And the jackasses roosting in the trees on the Gully laugh in their own weird fashion in reply, while the howl of the dingoes on the distant hills quivers dolefully through the night.



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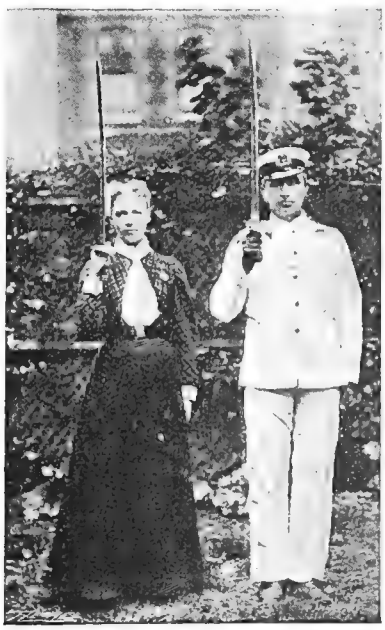
The Most Expert Swordsman In The Navy.

By J. J. Bennett.

Photographs by Stephen Cribb, Southsea.

The performance of the muscular cavalryman, who, by the vigour of his arm, severs the carcase of a sheep with a single cut of his sword, is fairly familiar to everyone. But the cavalryman is trained to do these things and the mutton carving exploit fails to arouse much enthusiasm. It is taken more as an indication that the performer is able to give a good account of himself hand-to-hand with an enemy—a thing the British soldier is expected to do—than as a feat of skill. But whatever one may expect of Tommy Atkins, nobody looks to a sailor for feats of swordsmanship. His training is not of the kind to develop this sort of skill at arms. It is true that Jack is drilled in the use of the navy cutlass—one of the most cumbrous and least useful weapons served out to Her Majesty's forces. But his skill lies more in the direction of working big guns than in wielding small arms. Cutlass exercise with him takes somewhat the position of a subsidiary accomplishment. Yet, despite this fact, one of the cleverest swordsmen in Her Britannic Majesty's service is a sailor.



Mr. and Mrs. Barrett saluting.

Chief Gunner Barrett, some of whose feats are here illustrated, may fairly claim to be the most expert swordsman in our navy. With him sword feats are a hobby, and he aims not so much at feats requiring great strength as at those which demand for their performance much precision and dexterity. Mr. Barrett is a typical representative of a class of seamen which is unequalled in any other navy in the world—*i.e.*, the British warrant officers—men who are the very cream of our sailors. During his thirty years' service in the Navy he has risen from the position of a bluejacket boy to that of chief gunner, and the chief's rank is the only commissioned one that the British tar can obtain. For the benefit of those unfamiliar with naval matters one may explain that a chief gunner, boatswain, or carpenter ranks as a sub-lieutenant, but his position is not so renumerative as that of the quartermaster or riding master in the army. It is, however, a much coveted one.

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Mr. Barrett has for many years borne the reputation of being a smart hand with the cutlass. But it is only in the last seven years that he has come prominently before the public as a swordsman. In his feats he uses two weapons, a heavy cutlass and a navy sword. Whilst serving on the China Station the officers of the fleet, by way of showing their admiration of his skill, presented him with a Japanese sword. But Mr. Barrett found that his Sheffield cutlery still held the field against all rivals—even against those turned out in the Land of the Chysanthemum, where they are reputed to manufacture swords of exceptional strength and keen temper of blade. One of Mr. Barrett's first exhibitions in public was given at the famous Excellent gunnery establishment, Portsmouth. Since that time he has been much in demand, and has given some fifty exhibitions in London and the provinces, mostly in aid of charitable objects.

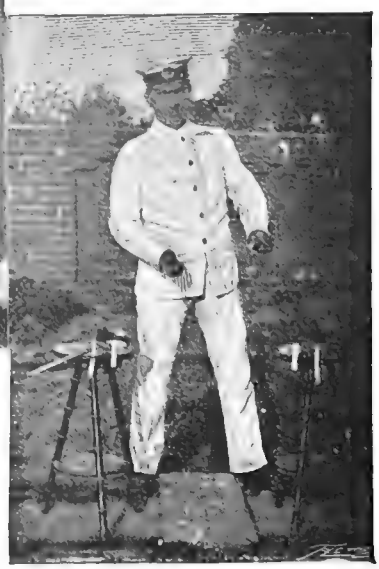
A bar of lead rests on tissue paper loops hung upon the edges of razors—

Then with one swift stroke Mr. Barrett cuts clean through the lead.

He was in charge of the first party of bluejackets which attended the Royal Military Tournament. This was in 1886, and a good many Londoners will remember the interest his feats then excited.

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who opened the tournament that year, was so pleased with Mr. Barrett's performance that he sent for him to the Royal box, shook hands with him, and heartily complimented him upon the display given by himself and the naval contingent. Since that time Mr. Barrett and his clever wife have had the honour of appearing before Royalty on several occasions.

Probably the most attractive feat Mr. Barrett performs is that of severing a bar of lead that is resting upon the bowls of pipes smoked by two bluejackets. The men "get up steam;" the ends of the bar are lodged on the pipes, there is a bright flash as the broad-bladed cutlass descends, and the lead falls to the ground, cut evenly in half. One might think the experiment rather trying to the men's teeth. But, as a matter of fact, there is no jar, so clean is the cut, and the puffs of smoke are not even interrupted. Occasionally, however, a bluejacket does get nervous, and shuts his eyes in order that he may not see the weapon descend. One of the men in an accompanying illustration has done this. In such a case it is amusing to see the look of surprise on the man's face when he realises that the lead has been severed. We give photos showing Mr. Barrett performing this feat. In one of the pictures it will be seen that he is pointing to the part of the sword with which the lead is cut, whilst the pieces in the men's hands show how



And though the metal is severed the tissue paper remains uncut.

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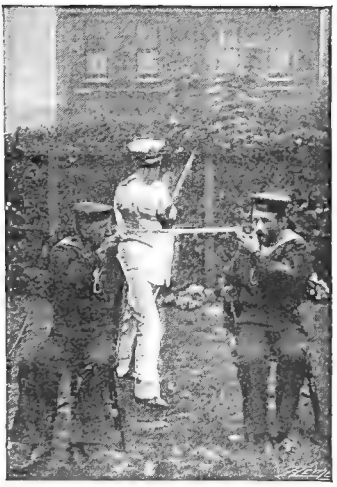
cleanly the bar has been divided. Another very difficult feat performed by Mr. Barrett is to cut in two a bar of lead that is resting on tissue paper loops hung upon the edges of razors. So delicate is this "fix-up" that the bar has to be very carefully placed in position to prevent the razors—which are very sharp—from cutting the loops. The slightest additional weight would do this, yet Mr. Barrett manages to cut the lead in two without injuring the paper. A remarkable thing about this feat is that, however often he may perform it he never has a mishap with his delicate apparatus. Amongst other photos illustrating this is one showing the cutlass—which, by the way, is in itself a heavy weapon—just as it is dividing the lead.

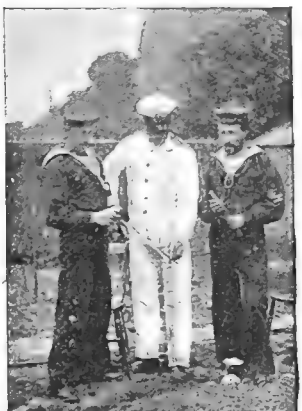


This feat is somewhat similar to that illustrated on the previous page.

Placing glasses of water at the edges of two stools, and lodging a bar of lead upon their rims, Mr. Barrett will cut in half the lead without so much as creating a tremor in the water. He does this feat in various way—one with glasses piled two high and the other with only two glasses in use. But really to appreciate the skilful swordsmanship displayed one should see the feats performed and have an opportunity of examining the apparatus. Some of the feats are quite as remarkable for their deftness as was that which Saladin showed to Cœur de Lion when he divided the feather cushion.

Here Mr. Barrett is shown in the very act of severing the lead.

Like her husband, Mrs. Barrett handles the sword cleverly. Her feats are more sensational in character than his, and they require an exceedingly delicate touch. For instance, if she were not very confident, and very sure of her stroke when cutting a potato on her husband's neck, she might find herself a widow at the end of the performance. But the only occasion on which anything has gone wrong was when Mrs. Barrett was exhibiting at a bazaar in Cannon Street Hotel. This was her first appearance in public, and several ladies in the audience began screaming just as the sword descended. This unnerved Mrs. Barrett, who let the weapon go too far and cut her husband badly. But he patched up his wound, and the performance went on without further mishap. It is nothing unusual for ladies to faint or scream whilst Mrs. Barrett is going through her feats—but such things do not disconcert her now.



In this extraordinary feat the pipes are not knocked from the mouth of the sailors.

Mrs. Barrett has exhibited her skill with the sword before several Royal personages and at various places in London, for once during his career Mr. Barrett was gunner of H.M.S. *President*, drillship in the Thames. In addition to the feat above mentioned she cuts in half a potato that is placed beneath a handkerchief and held on her husband's outstretched palm—and this without injuring the handkerchief. For the successful performance of such dangerous tricks as these it is necessary that one should have absolute command of the sword, and be able to stop it just in the right place. If it goes only a hair's breadth too far a bad accident is the result. In case any of our lady readers should desire to add skill in sword feats to their other accomplishments, it will he interesting to explain the method of practice adopted by Mrs. Barrett to get the necessary

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command of her sword. First she began by cutting into a lump of putty. By assiduous practice she became so expert that she could stop the sword at any depth she wished in this. Next she placed potatoes and apples on a table and practised cutting into them. Then her feats were worked up by easy stages. It is not only as a swordswoman that Mrs. Barrett is expert. She excels in the use of Indian clubs and was the first woman to give public exhibitions of battleaxe swinging—an exercise that resembles the clubs, but is much harder work, and dangerous too, if not very smartly done. As will be seen by her portrait, Mrs. Barrett has not a very muscular appearance, yet she has accomplished some remarkable feats of endurance on the various occasions in which she has exhibited in public.

Mr. Barrett has three little children, all of whom are accomplished athletes.

"It is really a wonderful performance," said the late Duchess of Teck when Mrs. Barrett was presented to her at the conclusion of one of her displays. Mr. and Mrs. Barrett evidently believe in exercises of this kind for they are training their children to follow in their parents footsteps so far as these things go. Each of the little ones shown in the picture with their father is already an expert with either the clubs or dumb-bells. The sword feats will probably follow.

If Mr. Barrett were not so widely known, if he had not performed his most wonderful feats so often in public, I should scarcely have dared to write this article, in spite of such convincing witnesses as the accompanying photographs. For the British public has become a very sceptical Thomas, and would certainly have shrugged its shoulders and turned contemptuously away. "Such things are impossible," people might well have said. "How can any man cut through a bar of lead supported on two pipes without injuring the pipes at all? The cheek of these magazines—!" Well, and I do not mind confessing that when first I heard of Mr. Barrett's performances I was the least bit incredulous, although tolerably familiar with wonderful feats of swordsmanship. To-day, even after having witnessed the performance on more than one occasion, I am quite in the dark as to the scientific explanation of the razor and tissue paper feat, and I doubt whether any amount of scientific explanation would render it any less marvellous and more possible.

Mrs. Barrett is also wonderfully expert at swordsmanship. She cuts a potato in two while it rests upon her husband's open palm. The slightest mishap would injure the hand of the Chief Gunner.

Another of Mrs. Barrett's feats is to divide a potato that rests upon her husband's neck.

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By E. A. Smith.

What was it they had quarrelled about? Heaven only knows!

They hardly knew themselves, and for any outsider to propound a theory on the sore subject, would have been to meddle with things beyond him. Jealousy was at the bottom of it, and as of the two, the lady felt most injured, she was probably most in fault.

It was quite a year after their broken engagement, that they met at a friend's country house. They encountered each other unexpectedly on the stairs, and for a moment were as truthfully embarrassed as a schoolboy, and a bread-and-butter miss, at the most blushing age, could have been. Then conventionality rushed to their aid, and made them fulsomely talkative.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, Miss Herrick! I did not think of meeting you here."

"I daresay not. It is only a short visit. I leave to-morrow." It had taken her two seconds to make this resolution. He looked politely sceptical.

"But some lady friend of our hostess, was coming to-day, to stay a week or ten days. Are you that friend? I heard no name mentioned."

"It is most kind of her, but I have many engagements just now."

"I would not hurry away if I were you. The country is pleasant, and will be until the weather breaks."

He spoke as unemotionally as though she were some great-aunt of the family he was staying with, who had come there for her rheumatism. Yet in reality he was thinking how sweetly pretty her hair was under the lamplight, and what on earth possessed her to have that sweet odour of violets about her which reminded him of—dash it all! what a disappointing world it was!

"How are you getting on with your book?" she asked—anxious to change the subject to one in which she might score a little more. "I mean your last book."

"Abominably. That is the mildest word I can think of. How about yours? The first one I mean."

"The first and last I'm thinking. May I use your word, although it is a little mild?"

"Ah, well, it is only a pastime for the fortunate Miss Herrick. She can easily do without that little amusement."

Ida Herrick was justly indignant at this sordid view.

"That is a great waste," he answered slowly "at least it would be with some people. As a rule the thing you feel least is usually the best written. Try without any heart at all."

This was really the rudest of speeches, and he was searching himself for an apology, but she gave him no time.

"The truest novel has yet to be written. But it takes two to do it, a man and woman."

"Surely that is nothing new, nor are the books better nor worse than the majority."

"I doubt if it has been done the way I mean. In this book the man should draw the female characters, and the woman the men."

"But I thought—"

"That is a mistake. If I wanted the true judging of a man, I would ask a woman and *vice versâ*. You see there is instinct in both cases."

Then all I can say is, that instinct makes an aw—"

He spoke so emphatically that she stopped him.

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For a moment they were as embarrassed as a Schoolboy and a Bread-and-Butter Miss.

"You need not be afraid, Miss Herrick, a man can be most solemnly convincing without bad language."

She laughed a little, but hardly with amusement, and tried to think of something to say. He suddenly assumed a brisk and business-like air.

"Suppose we test this theory of yours the next wet day that ever is. We both know something of the craft, and Mrs. More will give us up the library for a whole quiet morning,"

She saw difficulties and hesitated, but quite forgot her intention of leaving next day. He saw the hesitancy and struck it into determination with an artfully planted gibe.

"Of course, if it's merely an idle opinion with nothing to back it—"

"It is a fixed conviction," she answered, "and I am willing to test it—"

"Very well then, the first wet day. Of course the story must be a short one, we could not keep the peace through more than one chapter, could we?"

"Surely we are not so childish as to quarrel over a matter of business; the idea is too absurd."

This loftiness set him down, as it was meant to do, and that evening their civility to each other had great distance in it. On seeing this, Mrs. More, who had pretended a total forgetfulness of their broken engagement, became very hopeful. Her awe and admiration, too, at their professional industry, on the first wet morning, was excellently expressed, and the library was placed entirely at the service of genius.

"On condition that you read us the joint production after dinner, Mr. Hurst," she demanded quite gushingly. "Think how it will reconcile us to the atrocious wet day."

Mr. Hurst glanced at Ida for permission.

"The very thing. We shall want an impartial judge."

"There can be no objection to that," she answered with serene indifference that barely covered a great many objections, "unless, of course, it is very bad indeed."

"Oh, it won't be that, Mrs. More," said Hurst reassuringly. "The moral tone will be everything that you can desire."

And then they saw that the demure little serge gown, with its white collar and cuffs, was the disguise of a small fury, contemptuously calm as she tried to be.

"Of course, as a matter of business"—began Hurst warningly, but Mrs. More had already left them, so while Ida placed herself at an extreme window, he sat down at the writing table, and produced, besides foolscap, a quill pen more than half a yard long, so that the feather waved over his shoulder as he wrote. She took a dislike to it on the spot.

"What an unpleasant-looking pen! It's a caricature."

"Think so? It was a present to me, so I laid it by for a great occasion. Shall we begin? I'll undertake writing, spelling, and the girl, if you will concentrate your energies on the man."

The general outline of the plot was quickly arranged between them, but details were more trying.

"I may as well tell you frankly," said Hurst, "that, unless your man is very nice, I shall not allow my girl to have anything to say to him. I must insist on his being a gentleman."

Once again the disguised fury peeped out of her eyes.

"As though I could possibly draw a cad!"

"That shows poverty of ideas. You ought to be able to draw one. I shall think nothing of your literary ability it you cannot evolve such a simple thing as that."

She felt she had to assert herself.

"I want the first speech, please."

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But his pen was already squeaking busily over the paper.

"Sorry! the lady insists on the first word and the last. I am fast losing control of her tongue! Now, what are you going to say?"

"How can I possibly tell, unless I know what you have written?"

He felt her indignation just.

"It will take a little time, but I will read it out."

He did so at some length. She listened with apparently no interest whatever.

"And is that your idea of a pretty girl?" she said contemptuously, just to punish him for his heroine being fair-haired and blue-eyed.

"It is," he answered stoutly, "and I know far better what a pretty girl is like than you do. There is instinct, you see."

In some haste she began to dictate, and the quill pen to hurry after as quickly as it could.

"And is that your idea of a pretty man? Need he be quite so ugly?"

"Good looks are of no importance in a man. Please go on. I lose the thread if you are so slow."

The collaborator bowed his good-looking head meekly, and scratched resignedly on.

"Excuse me. I'll write it, of course, but he wouldn't say that if he was really a man."

"But he is a man, and he does say it."

"He may be from your point of view; from mine he's a molly!"

"Oh!" she cried, "you are more correct than I thought. We shall never last through a chapter. What is wrong now?"

"Why, he would never talk about giving her up for her happiness. He would stick to her for his own."

"How selfish!"

"Not at all. I suppose he means to work for her, and love her, and take care of her! He will have to promise all that before he wins this girl of mine. She is worth it."

"But I thought," she said, ever so little wistfully, "that we had decided against a happy ending?"

"Of course. So we have. I forgot for a moment that we are to be realistic."

There was no humour in his tone then, only bitterness, and the work went on for some time without criticism on either side.

"You can take a breathing space now, while I write the girl's letter."

Nothing loth, she leant back at ease, and watched him. After all, it was pleasant that they two were alone together, even remembering what was past and gone. It seemed absurd that a meaningless flirtation with a wretched little subaltern had actually had power to part them. How nice he looked, how familiar the companionship seemed. But surely he had aged more than one year since their parting. He was even a little gray.

Looking up suddenly, he caught the softness in her eyes, and his face changed.

"Well," he said gently, "I am waiting."

"But what does the letter say? I must know that first."

"I read every word aloud as I wrote it."

"Then I could not have been listening."

He drew a chair up, surprisingly near his own.

"Come here, and read as I write. It will save me trouble."

She came, and he drew the chair still closer, to make it more convenient for them both. Then he began carefully punctuating, as she glanced over the page. He had not made more than two fat full stops and a semicolon before she seized the pen by its feather top, and sent the nib wildly gyrating over his neat MS.

"What induced you to do that? I shall have to write the page again." But he spoke

"What an unpleasant-looking pen," she said, "it's a caricature."

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without vexation, and with the ghost of a smile.

"Indeed, you will not. It is monstrous!"

"Is the style so faulty? I thought it rather good."

"I know nothing about the style. It is the matter I so strongly object to. Do you think any girl would be so poor-spirited as to write such a letter as yours? Why, for the last half hour I have had almost to keep her at arm's length to prevent her making a fool of herself."

Her sparkling indignation was intensely real, and she held firmly to the feather pen, that it might not be constrained into assisting at more libellous matter. Yet he had the audacity to still smile.

"That is your mistake again. You may have kept her at arm's length, but the man, the real man, would have done just the opposite. Take my word for it. You see, she is my heroine, and I am very fond of her, but having acted unwisely, she ought not to be too proud to say so."

She turned a little pale then, and in her turn began carefully punctuating.

"But even if she did, the man might not—"

"Oh yes, he would; you admit he is a gentleman?"

She glanced up. He, too, was pale and grave, and in his kind eyes she saw intense anxiety. Then the feather pen did things so wild that he took it from her.

"Surely you can trust him, when he is so entirely in your hands to do what you like with?"

Her next speech was entirely irrelevant to anything in the story.

"It was so ridiculous of you to imagine that under any circumstances I could possibly care for that conceited little monkey! Where *is* my handkerchief?"

In her haste, she could not find it; but there are other methods.

Perhaps he employed these. At any rate, they were very happy.

"So at last the long year comes to an end. The very dreariest I ever lived through."

"It has been dreadful," she admitted; "I only wonder—but what are you doing?"

For he was making dozens of crosses on the MS.

"Only finishing the story."

"How absurd, and Mrs. More is to see it."

"They are absurd—on paper. No satisfaction in them. But shall we just glance through our effort to see if it is fit for publication?"

They did so, on the best of terms.

"Well, is it?" she asked when the last word had been reached.

He shook his head, and looked into her face with smiling eyes.

"No?" she asked softly.

"In one sense, yes. In another, no." He paused, and took her face between his hands. "My darling, I think it is the very worst story that was ever written; but ——" She took hold of his wrists and tried to draw his hands from her face, but his hands remained there nevertheless.

"But it is the best story in the world; for the ending is simply perfect."

She seized the pen by its feather top, and sent the point wildly gyrating over his neat MS.

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THE HOME OF SANTA CLAUS

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

By Geo. A. Best.

Illustrated entirely from photographs by Arthur Ullyett, Leigh-on-Sea.

CHAPTER I.

IN CLOUDLAND.

Leslie Gordon was a very pretty and thoughtful boy, and, what is even better than being pretty and thoughtful, he was both brave and kind. Leslie was something of an explorer, too, in his own small way. He had once discovered the source of a brook which, after leaving the great river, ran for many miles through a very hilly part of the country; and he had afterwards made a map of the brook, showing how it gradually became narrower and narrower until the spot was reached where the water came bubbling up from the earth with great force. This map (which I am bound to admit nobody but the explorer could understand) was carefully tacked to the nursery wall; and Leslie would often give very learned lectures, to a select circle of friends, descriptive of his adventures and trials in connection with the expedition.

But the select circle of friends did not take much interest in these lectures; in fact, they became so bored at length that the map was one day torn down and burned in the nursery fire, after which Leslie Gordon drew another chart (which bore no likeness to the first), and lectured for hours to a great tom-cat, which never appeared bored, or doubted the assertion that the brook was a thousand miles in length, or that it contained an abundance of bloaters and kippers, besides a few stray sharks and sea-serpents.

Every boy and girl in the United Kingdom would like to know who Santa Claus is; where the good man lives, and how he manages to distribute so many hundreds of tons of toys at Christmastide. Leslie Gordon was even more perplexed about this subject than are the majority of children. He had frequently asked his father why Santa Claus was never to be seen except in the windows of toy shops, but Mr. Gordon had only smiled in a knowing sort of way, and replied: "You had better ask mother, little one. She knows far more about old Santa Claus than I do." And when mother was questioned, she had answered: "You'll know all about it when you are a man, Leslie. Ask your father."

So Leslie determined to write a letter to old Father Christmas; and he worked on it for a whole week, using four penny bottles of ink and a complete packet of stationery. And when the letter was posted, it was such a mass of blots and grease that the Postmaster General could not read the address, so he returned the note, several weeks afterwards, through the Dead Letter Office.

Mr. Gordon was a very clever man. He had constructed several flying machines which wouldn't work; and his latest invention was a gigantic war balloon, which was warranted to go to any part of the world and never come back again. When Leslie Gordon first beheld the pear-shaped monster, it was fully inflated with more gas than could have been burned in an ordinary house in six

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months, and anchored to the roof of a large conservatory in the garden. A short ladder led from the asparagus bed to the car of the balloon; and while Mr. Gordon was making a rough map of the North Pole in his study, Leslie climbed into the car and sat down.

"I wonder if this thing would take me to the home of Santa Claus," he mused. "Dada says there's enough silk in it to make a thousand ball dresses, so it would be a fine present to give to Mrs. Claus."

Leslie would give very learned lectures.

Just as Leslie had finished making this very kind and thoughtful speech, he was startled by a terrible crash beneath the car. At the same moment the balloon shot upwards towards the clouds, with a portion of the conservatory roof still attached to the anchor.

The old cat never appeared bored.

"Oh dear!" screamed poor little Leslie, as he watched the earth rapidly sink beneath his feet. "Oh dear! Whatever shall I do?"

At this moment the conservatory roof fell from the swaying anchor, and the balloon rose to a great height.

"Now, I'm in a fog!" exclaimed Leslie, as the great machine soared into a dark cloud which hung around the car like mist. "And it's so dark and lonely," he sobbed pitifully. "I think I'll say my prayers—bless dada an' mamma, and make me a good little boy—then I can go to sleep, and the big gas bag won't hit the moon before morning."

And while the balloon was passing rapidly over a great ocean, the lonely little traveller lay curled up at the bottom of the wicker car, and sobbed out his simple prayer until the clouds disappeared, and the stars peeped out one by one, to gaze curiously upon the upturned face of an unwilling visitor to cloudland.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOME OF SANTA CLAUS.

All through the long night the balloon sailed through an ocean of clouds, passing first over a great sea, and then drifting inland far above a tract of flat country, in which the lights of many stately cities were reflected on the waters of the dark canals which connected them. And presently the sun rose; his first rays falling upon a more beautiful land, covered with dark forests, relieved here and there by the gleam of a silver river, and bounded by high mountains with snow-clad peaks, which appeared to rise quickly into the air to meet the falling balloon.

The falling machine was now drifting towards the grounds of the only building in sight—an old-fashioned mansion covered with glittering hoar-frost—and the heart of our little traveller beat wildly with excitement, for he descried a very familiar form standing on the highest point of the great mountain with arms outstretched. There was a kindly smile of welcome on the ruddy face, which appeared all the redder and jollier by contrast with the mass of snow-white hair which peeped from beneath a frost-covered hood.

In another moment the car fell to the ground with a great crash, and Leslie Gordon was

Leslie determined to write a long letter to Santa Claus.

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disentangled from a mass of silk and netting by the strong arms of Santa Claus himself. Leslie was not a shy boy, and when he discovered that the hands of the jovial old man were warm, in spite of his frosty appearance, he felt quite comfortable and was not at all afraid.

The balloon suddenly shot upwards towards the clouds.

"Good morning, old Santa Claus!" he exclaimed, politely. "How jolly and warm you are! I thought you were only made of plaster of Paris at first; but you don't feel a bit like that! My name is Leslie Gordon, and I'm five years old and very hungry. Have you got a bit of Christmas pudding about you?"

An unwilling visitor to Cloudland.

"There's plenty indoors, Leslie," replied Santa Claus, pointing to the glittering homestead, "and there's a large joint of roast beef all ready waiting for us on the table."

"Any dessert—almonds and raisins, and sour oranges?" asked Leslie.

"Tons of them!" answered Santa Claus, "and there are also a number of liquorice powders, and some bottles of black draught, Leslie!" he continued, with a sly wink.

"Do you live in this big place all alone?" asked Leslie, as they approached the large entrance hall of the palace.

"No; I keep about fifty thousand willing servants," was the astonishing reply.

"Don't tell fibs," exclaimed the visitor, rudely (even Leslie was very rude at times). "I don't see a single servant! Who does the washing, and cooks, and makes your bed, and darns your socks?"

"My toys and mannikins," answered Santa Claus, mysteriously. "I'll tell you all about them presently, Leslie; and to-morrow I'll take you over the mountain to see my town of toys."

Santa Claus and his little guest now entered a large dining-hall together. The room contained only a long table of unpainted wood, and two kitchen chairs. The walls were unpapered, and there was not a single picture to be seen. Leslie was bitterly disappointed, in spite of the fact that the table was covered with Christmas fare, and the steam from a huge joint of beef filled the apartment with a most delightful odour.

"Well, Leslie, what do you think of my home?" asked Santa Claus, taking his seat before the steaming dish.

The balloon sailed through an ocean of clouds.

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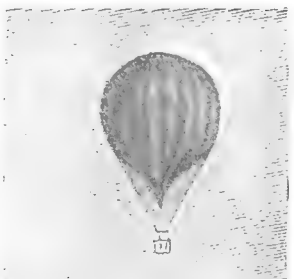
"It's rather shabby!" answered the guest, candidly. "But there seems to be plenty to eat and drink. Our dining-room at home has saddle-bag chairs, and a telescope table, and nice pictures on the walls of men fighting and shipwrecks at sea."

"The window panes are *my* pictures, little man," replied Santa Claus. "Have you noticed them?"

Leslie glanced carelessly at a window with two large panes, and a cry of wonder burst from his lips.



He beheld a very familiar form standing with outstretched hands.

"How lovely!" he exclaimed. "The glass is covered with frosty pictures of mountains and lakes, and they are all moving! We've got nothing like *that* at home!"

"Tell me what you see," said Santa Claus.

"Oh! dear old Santa! I can see dada's house and the garden at home!" cried Leslie, clapping his hands gleefully. "And our old postman has walked up the drive, and mamma has run out to meet him. And now dada has run out, too, and they're both reading the letter together, and laughing and crying at the same time. And dad has given the postman some money, and shaken hands with him. I wonder what the letter was about."

"About you, Leslie," answered Santa Claus. "It tells your father and mother that you are quite safe. I posted the letter only five minutes ago."

"It's soon got there," said Leslie. "How did you know where I live?"

"My windows tell me all about millions of little boys and girls," explained Father Christmas. "I can see every kind action they do; but I should require a hundred miles of glass to record all the naughty tempers and wicked actions of my little people, so I have only the good deeds brought before me. And I find that twenty window panes hold them all easily."

Leslie gave a great sigh of relief.

"You didn't see me smack baby's face when he pricked my toy balloon, then?" he asked.

"No, I didn't see *that*," answered Santa Claus. "I didn't see *that*, little man, but I remember noting that you gave a whole packet of sweets, which you had just bought, to a ragged little boy, when you were last in London."

"What shall I get for that?" bargained Leslie, with an air of great virtue. "I want a steam engine, and a box of tools, and a clockwork elephant. Look!" he continued excitedly, without giving Santa Claus time to answer the question. "There's a little girl in the frost picture on the next pane to mine, who is helping a blind old man across a plank bridge. How much is that worth?"

"That little girl has earned five shillings and a workbox already," replied Santa Claus. "And now, Leslie," he continued, "although I have no piano, you shall hear some really good music while we are eating our pudding."

And in another moment, a grand military band of toy soldiers marched across the table playing "The Mistletoe Bough" with great spirit.

When the toy band had marched six times round the table, the musicians stood in front of Leslie and marked time, while a Christmas pudding was mysteriously lowered through a trap-door in the ceiling on to the cloth beneath. Then the drum-major cried

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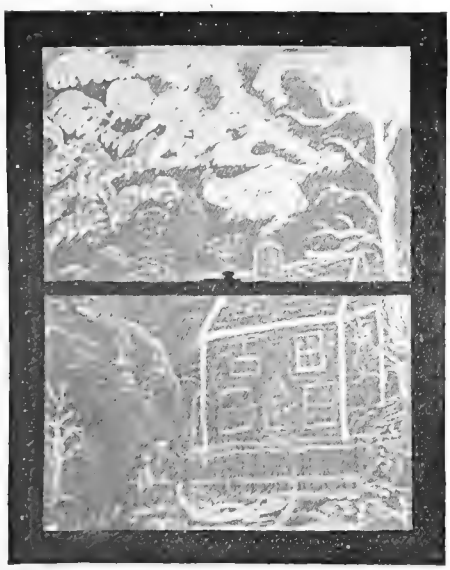
"Quick march!" in a thin squeaky voice, and the soldiers arranged themselves in a circle around the dish and played: "Here we come a-wassailing!" until the broad shoulders of Santa Claus shook with merriment. Leslie Gordon fairly screamed with delight.

"They're all alive!" he cried. Have they got real bones inside of them, Santa Claus?

"These little soldiers are only made of lead, Leslie," explained Santa Claus, as the big drummer sat on his instrument, and filled a tiny pipe with a single grain of tobacco. "They can walk and talk, eat and smoke, but they're not real flesh and blood as you and I are. In my town of toys you'll see tin horses which can run alone, and without winding up; live dolls



The window was covered with frosty pictures.

scrubbing out their tiny houses; clockwork trains hurrying to and fro, managed by doll engine-drivers and India-rubber guards; and toy ironclads manned by tiny sailors such as you can buy for a few coppers in the toy-shops of London. All of these little people, composed of sawdust and rags, are great friends of mine, for I have the power of giving life to a certain number of the millions of toys which are made in my town every year. But I love my mannikins far more dearly, because they are really tiny

The Home of Santa Claus.

men and women, who can feel pain, and know both joy and sorrow, as we do."

"Show me a mannikin, please, Santa Claus," pleaded Leslie.

Father Christmas blew a tiny whistle which was suspended to his girdle, and a lovely little lady, scarcely three inches in height, appeared on the table. At the same moment a tiny gentleman of the same size, attired in full evening dress, and carrying a smart walking stick, approached Santa Claus, and politely raised his hat.

"These are sample mannikins of the better class, Leslie," explained Santa Claus. "This gentleman is a City merchant, and the lady is his wife. There are thousands of similar people of all kinds in this house; and it is they, assisted by a few intelligent dolls, who keep my house clean, cook for me, and do everything which I require. I have mannikin butchers and bakers, mannikin lawyers and doctors, and even chimney-sweeps and car-

The table was covered with Christmas fare.

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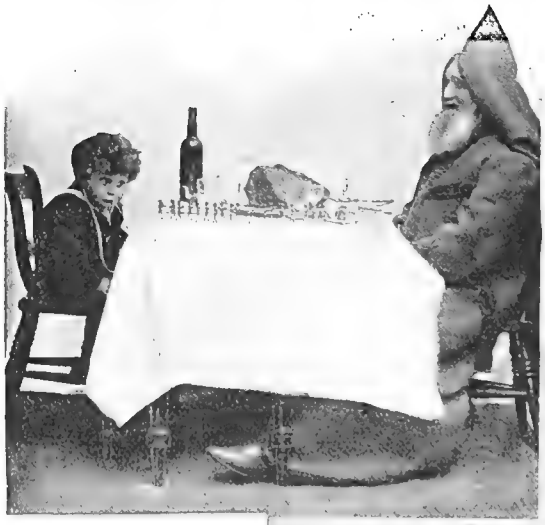
penters! Near the town of toys there is an underground city, peopled entirely by these little creatures; and I hear that in consequence of a dispute between the doll Mayor of Santa Clauboro' and the King Mannikin of Sweetchester, there is every likelihood of a war between the armies and navies of the rival towns."



A grand band of toy soldiers marched across the table.

"Why do the mannikins live underground?" asked Leslie, who was greatly interested in these fascinating little creatures.

"Because they dislike the light of day, and work only during the night," answered Santa Claus. "As a rule, mannikins sleep during the day-time, and that is why you have never seen one before. Every house in the world contains a number of these tiny men and women. They have streets around cornices and door-frames, and tubular railways in the walls, with stations at frequent intervals throughout the house. It is my mannikin agents, Leslie, who carry down the presents on Christmas Eve, which are placed on house-tops all over the world many weeks before Yuletide. Without their aid I should never be able to distribute so many tons of toys in a few hours. And now, my dear little fellow," concluded Father Christmas, dismissing the mannikins with a wave of the hand, "I will relate to you a story which no little boy has ever heard before—the true history of Santa Claus!"

The soldiers arranged themselves in a circle round the pudding.

"Oh, how lovely!" cried Leslie, shuffling about on his chair. "And when I go home I'll tell it to papa and mama and baby. I know—I'll write it all out, and call it 'The Jography of Santa Claus.'"

"Biography, Leslie," said Santa Claus. "Yes, that would be a good idea."

"D'you know, Santa, I wanted to know who you were, so I wrote you a nice letter. But the postman brought it back, and said he didn't know where you lived. I thought the postman knew where everybody lived. Didn't you? Now, go on," Leslie added, "I hope the story'll be exciting." And Santa Claus began.

(To be continued.)

A pair of mannikins appeared on the table.

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OUR STEREOSCOPIC GALLERY.

The Moon-Child.

The Pigeons of St. Mark's.

Chrysanthemums.

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Izaak Walton, Junior.

A Big Wave.

The Captive Balloon.

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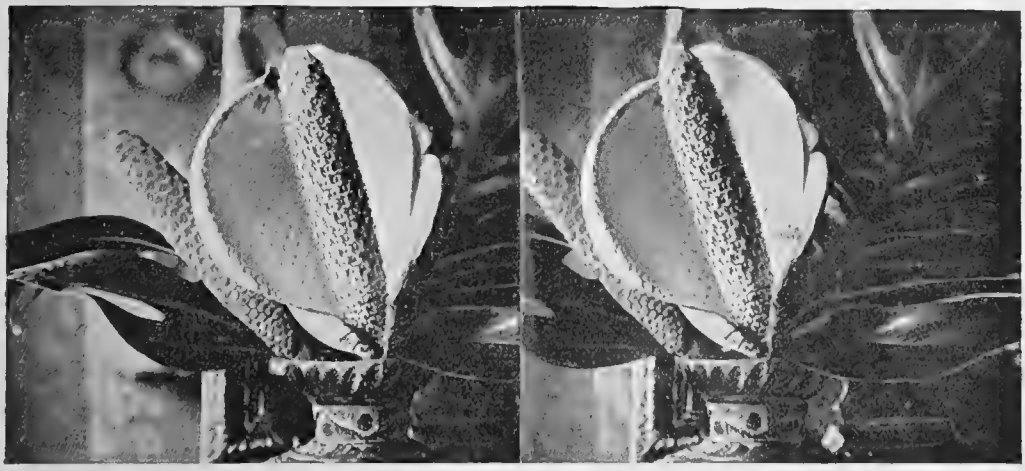
"By Killarney's Rocks and Rills."



The Fruit of the *Monstera Delicosa*.

Dryburgh Abbey, Scotland.

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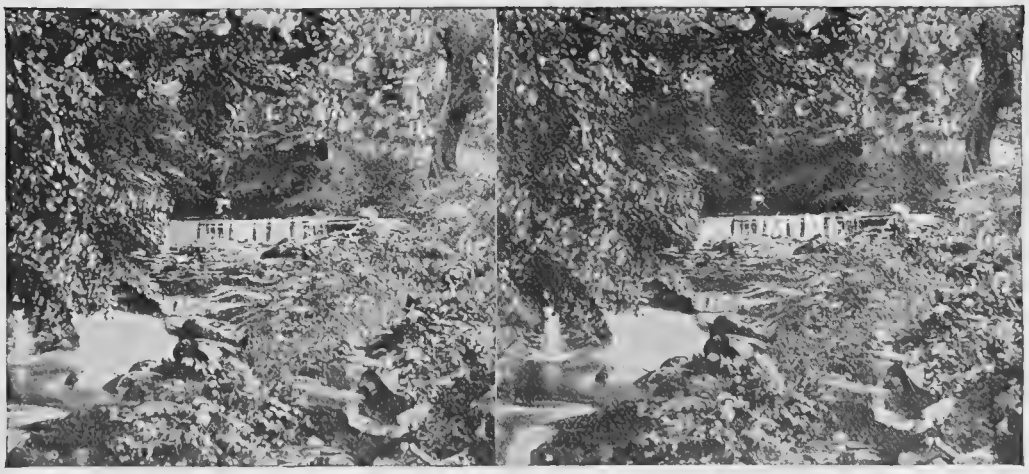
Cherry Blossoms.



A Waterfall at Loch Tay.

Awaiting a Bite.

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The Revenge of Chief Warder Langton.

By Victor L. Whitechurch.

If ever there was a case of intense hatred it was that which Sergeant James Langton bore Walter Carew. And it came about in this way.

When James Langton enlisted he left his heart in Dullminster in the keeping of Miriam Watson; but the vows between them—at least, as far as she was concerned, were destined to become broken, like the sixpence that they halved between them when they parted. And so it came to pass that during the period when Langton was broiling under the Indian sun on foreign service the letters from Miriam Watson became fewer and further between, until they ceased altogether. In vain he wrote to her—there was no answer.

And when Langton came back to the old country and visited Dullminster he had to listen to a very ugly story. He was told how bonnie Miriam Watson, the belle of the town, had run off with Walter Carew, the son of a Dullminster doctor, a handsome, reckless young fellow, whose reputation was not by any means one of the best. Nor was that the worst of it, for a year afterwards Miriam had returned to die, neglected and ill-treated by the brute who had tired of her. As for Walter Carew, nobody knew what had become of him, and nobody cared—except a few local tradesmen, who would have liked to balance their books more favourably.

Sergeant James Langton walked out to the little cemetery. There he found a grave in a quiet corner, and swore revenge from the bottom of his heart—and meant to have it whenever Providence or the devil threw Carew in his way. Long and earnestly he sought for him, but to no avail. Night and morning he prayed for the day of reckoning, forgetting that it were a wiser thing to leave vengeance to a higher Power. Nevertheless, in due time, after many years, the day of reckoning came.

* * * *

Chief-warder James Langton was no favourite at Dartmouth Convict Prison, either among his fellow-officers or with the prisoners. A sour, morose sort of man, he was rarely known by the former to laugh at a jest or to take part in any of their amusements, while to the latter he was the sternest and most uncompromising warder of the whole establishment. Any unfortunate wretch in broad-arrow garb caught by Chief-warder Langton whispering a word to a fellow prisoner, or skulking in his work, or committing the slightest breach of discipline, was pretty sure of being reported and getting at least twenty-four hours in the punishment cell, with the plainest of plain diet—16 ounces of bread and pure water.

Was there a particularly troublesome cus-

Google

When James Langton enlisted he left his heart in Dullminster.

tomer within the grim walls of the prison, a man who resented the deprivation of his liberty with all the fury of a wild beast, only let Chief-warder Langton come across him. The brute was sure to be subdued—not tamed, mind you; they rarely tame this kind of customer within gaol or without—but forced down to the discipline, and made to know that kicking against it only hurt himself.

There was more than one desperate ruffian who had cursed the chief warder loudly and deeply, and sworn, too, to have his life; but Langton only laughed in his low, chuckling kind of manner, and took no further notice. Once or twice he had been attacked; but it seemed to matter little to him, for he still went on in his stern, relentless way.

His fellow-warders did not hesitate to say that Langton was a disappointed man—that some event in his previous life had soured him and made him bitter. On this account he came to be pitied rather than disliked by many of them. As to his integrity, there was never the slightest doubt about it. The Governor of the prison always felt that Langton could be trusted implicitly, and when any service of a delicate nature had to be performed, the ex-sergeant was often the man chosen.

One day there arrived at Dartmouth a fresh prisoner whose features made Langton start and set his teeth when he saw him for the first time. He recognised his life's enemy.

Walter Carew had at length met with his deserts. He had sunk lower and lower in the social scale until, clothed in the garments of disgrace, he had come to work out a term of ten years penal servitude for forgery and embezzlement.

Long and keenly did Langton gaze upon the new comer, and a feeling of great satisfaction stole over him when he found that the recognition was by no means reciprocated. "Convict 137" little thought that in the person of the grizzled, iron-grey bearded, chief warder there stood the man he had wronged, and long since forgotten.

"What's come over Langton?" said one of the warders to another as they went off duty." He's as cheerful as a cricket. Never knew him smile before, and this afternoon he actually cracked a joke."

"Well, *I* thought he was funny, too," replied the other, "he caught a chap shirking this afternoon, and only grinned and called him a lazy scoundrel instead of reporting him."

But if Chief-warder Langton was disposed to be good-humoured that day, and for many days afterwards, it was because fate had at last placed his enemy in his power, and his cheerfulness was only the secret joy of feeling that he was within reach of his revenge.

There was no doubt about it that "Convict 137" was a most unlucky beggar. If there was a nasty job to be performed he was inevitably in it. If he broke the slightest rule, somehow or other it was sure to come before the Governor. The man protested sometimes; he did so when he was charged with tearing his clothes. He actually had the impudence to say that someone must have

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entered his cell when he was asleep and torn them purposely!

The Governor treated this as an excellent joke, and Langton, who was standing by, joined in the laughter. *He* thought it an excellent joke, too, and so he did the three days' punishment cell that No. 137 got for it. Even some of the warders used at times to feel a sneaking pity for the poor wretch, and to wonder why he had turned out such a "right down bad 'un."

For a "bad 'un" he certainly became. Eighteen months of this sort of thing with never a chance of getting good conduct marks —though he once got marked with the cat— does not improve a man's character, and in spite of the exhortations of the chaplain and the admonitions of the Governor, Walter Carew, at the end of that time, had developed into a dangerous and desperate individual.

But James Langton's revenge was by no means complete. He had acted very cautiously, and in no case had he let it be imagined that he had a personal spite against the prisoner. But he wanted more. He determined that a still heavier blow should fall upon the man, although he himself was not to be conspicuous in the striking of it.

One morning "Convict 137" found a little scrap of paper in his cell. How it got there he knew not—perhaps his story of a midnight intrusion was not so very far wrong after all. On this scrap of paper there was the following:

"Look out. Friends are planning your escape. Destroy this."

With his heart in a flutter and his brain in a whirl the convict did destroy it — in the best way he knew. He ate it.

Liberty! Cooped up within four walls; every action spied upon; ground down under the iron rod of an unbending discipline; day after day, month after month, year after year, the same stern, relentless routine. No converse; shut up not only within a cell, but within *oneself;* to brood, to chafe with the fury of an unconquerable thraldom; to feel it pressing in on every side, weighing upon body, and brain, and soul; forced to work and drudge, and toil through the hours of despair and weariness. Ah! the meaning of that wonderful word "liberty" to the prisoner. Small wonder that he trembled with excitement, and that there was a flush of joy in his face as he came forth to his labour. Chief-warder Langton noticed it, and there was a flush of joy in his face, too. The beginning of his terrible revenge was working.

As a cat plays with a mouse, so, in secret, the chief-warder played with his victim. For a whole month the convict received no other sign. The anguish of hope deferred was what his enemy wanted, and as he realised that it was there he muttered to himself:

"Ah, Walter Carew, *I* knew what it was to watch and wait for news. When I was down with fever at the hospital at Jungpore how I yearned for the letters that never came— never came at all—for she was playing me false, and *you* were the cause of it. Wait, then, a little longer!"

Then there appeared another mysterious scrap of paper in Carew's cell with only these words:

"Next week."

That was on the Monday, and it mean another week of mental torture to the prisoner

One morning "Convict 137" found a little scrap of paper in his cell.

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The following Monday there came another missive:

"Friday night."

The convict nearly fainted as he rolled it up and swallowed it. The chief-warder chuckled, and took the earliest opportunity of re-oiling the lock of the cell door where his enemy slept. This cell was on the ground floor and close to the iron-grated door which opened from outside on to the corridor.

On Thursday night the prisoner received a longer communication. It read thus:

"To-morrow night, after the prison clock has struck one, wait till the warder in charge has passed your cell. You will hear two taps on your door. Wait one minute. Then go out; the door will be open. Pass through the outer door, which will also be open. You can climb the outside wall with a plank you will find in the yard. Destroy this at once."

Such was Walter Carew's vision of freedom. This is how he obtained it.

In the building in which he was lodged were five tiers of cells, one above the other. The building was entered, as we have said, by means of a heavy iron gate, of which the chief warders only possessed a key. This opened directly into a corridor, with cells on either side. By a spiral iron staircase at the other end of the building, light iron galleries were reached, running on either side, by means of which access was gained to the upper cells. A warder was inside the building, and it was his duty to visit each cell in rotation, looking through the peephole provided, and seeing that the inmate was safe. It is obvious that it would take him some time—over half an hour—to do the whole round.

Outside Chief-warder Langton was on duty, and Chief-warder Langton played a very curious game that night.

One o'clock sounded, and Langton watched through the iron gate. Presently he saw the warder pacing along the ground floor, examining each cell—passing by an empty one a few doors removed from Carew's, the door of which empty cell was open. In a few minutes he had mounted the staircase and was pacing round the first gallery—then the second—then the third.

Chief-warder Langton had provided himself with a pair of elastic-sided boots instead of his regulation ones. Slipping them off and depositing them in a corner, he cautiously opened the outer gate, the lock of which was well oiled. In another moment he had his pass key in the door of Carew's cell, and silently turned it. Two light taps on the door, and the chief warder vanished into the empty cell and waited.

Had the warder in the gallery above looked down a minute later he would have seen Convict 137 emerge from his cell, slip along the few feet of corridor that lay between him and the gate, and vanish outside. Then he would have seen his superior officer slip out of his hiding-place, lock the cell of the escaped man, make his exit, and close and lock the outer gate. A moment later and he had his boots on, and was tracking his victim in the prison yard.

"No. 137" doubtless thought it was a curious thing to select a moonlight night for his escape. Crouching, however, in the shadow he made towards the wall, found a plank at the foot of it, raised it against the wall, and took stock of things.

About thirty paces or so away a sentry, with his carbine barrel shining in the moonlight, was mounting guard on a sort of raised terrace commanding a view of the wall. Carew shivered as he saw him. He would have shivered still more had he known that the man was the crack shot of the prison. Carefully marking the sentry's actions, he noticed that he paused for ten seconds or more at the end of each beat. There would just be time to reach the top of the wall and jump if he started to climb the instant the sentry began to walk in the opposite direction. So he set his teeth and commenced.

It was a desperate scramble, and there was an interested spectator in the person of the chief-warder, who, hidden in the courtyard, watched his every action. Nearly half-way up! The sentry had reached the end of his beat, and paused. One more effort—his hands clutched the top; he drew himself forward—Ah!

A shout behind him.

"Look out, sentry! On the wall behind you—quick!"

It was the voice of Chief-warder Langton.

The sentry turned like a flash of lightning. Yes, a prisoner was escaping—just about to drop on the other side.

"Fire, man!" yelled the chief-warder.

In an instant the sentry's carbine was at his shoulder. There was a flash of flame and a loud report, and "Convict 137" threw up his arms and fell back into the yard of the prison.

"Good God! I must have killed him," shouted the sentry.

"Yes," said the chief-warder, as he bent over the prostrate form, "you've given him his freedom in a way he little expected; but," he

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added under his breath, "exactly as *I* intended him to get it."

Of course there was an inquiry, but the thing remained shrouded in mystery. How the prisoner got out was never fathomed. Langton was not suspected for a moment of conniving at his escape, especially as he had been the first to give the alarm; but, nevertheless, both he and the under warder were severely reprimanded for negligence, as it was obvious that their watch was relaxed *somewhere*. But Chief-warder Langton cared little for this. He had had his revenge!

And sometimes, in the ugly, walled yard that forms the graveyard of the convict prison, where those who have died within its harsh precincts lie beneath unlettered stones in hopeless oblivion, Chief Warder Langton pauses for a moment or two. With a grim smile he stands upon a broad flagstone that covers the remains of the man who wronged him so bitterly, and on whom he was so terribly revenged after long years of waiting, and he thanks the sentry's unwavering aim as he raised his carbine to his shoulder that night.

But the grim smile fades away when, once in a while, at rare intervals, he wends his way back to his native home, and out into the corner of the quiet cemetery. And there the tear-drops of memory come flooding into his eyes, and he feels that even his terrible revenge was powerless to stifle the old love. Besides, there dawns upon him at that second grave the uncomfortable thought that he had better have left his revenge in the hands of Him who said, "Vengeance is mine."

For if we take our revenge into our own hands we are never satisfied therewith. The problem of retribution is often above our grasp. At all events Chief Warder Langton found it so, and in spite of the fact that his revenge was *terrible*, whenever he visited that quiet churchyard he felt that he had failed—somewhere.

His secret was his own, but those with whom he came in contact knew that somewhere in his life there had been a passage which he might have desired blotted out, and none ever dared question him, for the expression of his countenance forbade even a reference to such a subject.

There was a flash of flame, and "Convict 137" threw up his arms and fell back into the yard of the prison.

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PICTURE PREACHING

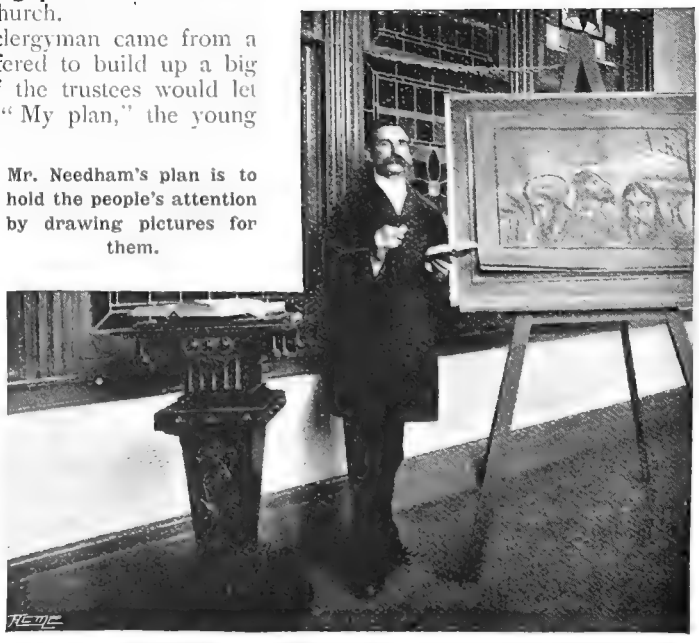
By C. Montgomery M'Govern.

Excursion trains, and the immense popularity and ever-growing cheapness of the bicycle have, no doubt, been a source of honest pleasure to thousands. But like nearly everything else, these delights have also their darker side. They are the bane of our clergymen, and the primary cause of that poor attendance of our churches which is so general a complaint nowadays. The clergy have put their heads seriously together, and many suggestions and attempts have been made so as to render the church service more attractive than it has hitherto been.

Perhaps the most successful of these attempts was that of the Rev. W. Carlile, of St. Mary-at-Hill Church, Monument. This courageous and enterprising gentleman not only introduced a fine magic lantern, and a brass band, into his church, but held lectures on all manner of topical subjects, beautifully illustrated with magic lantern slides, and gave solo trombone performances from his pulpit. Mr. W. Carlile indeed deserved the success he earned. So crowded was the church that hundreds had to be turned away; the excursion trains, the bicycle, and the public-house were forgottten.

A less sensational but even more interesting scheme for filling poorly attended places of worship has been tried with surprising success by the Calvary Baptist Church of Brooklyn. This building was erected some four years ago in a non-church-going neighbourhood, and, although no expense was spared to make it of more than ordinary attractiveness, for a long time a full house was the exception rather than the rule. The trustees secured the best music and the hardest-working pastors, but still the people would not come to church.

At this point a young clergyman came from a small country town, and offered to build up a big congregation immediately if the trustees would let him have his own way. "My plan," the young minister said, "is to catch the people's eye by drawing pictures for them, and while I am holding their eyes it will be an easy matter to reach their ears." The proposal to illustrate sermons by drawings made on the spot was so utterly unheard of that the trustees refused to listen to it at first, on the ground that they would be accused of running a Sunday theatre. But the earnest persistence of the young countryman won the day, and he was appointed pastor temporarily.



Mr. Needham's plan is to hold the people's attention by drawing pictures for them.

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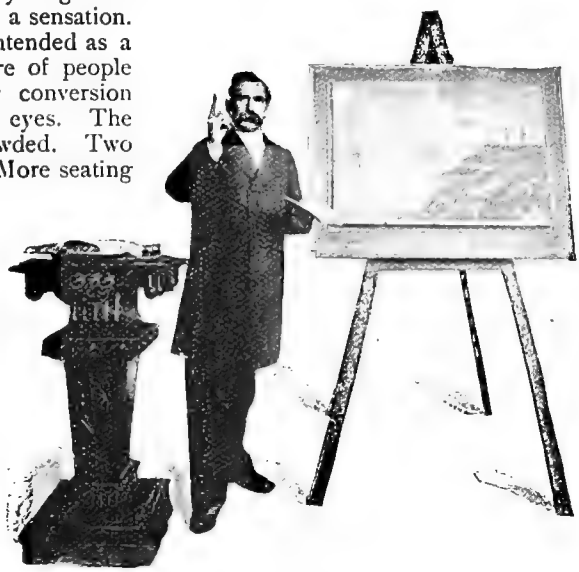
It was on a New Year's evening that the picture sermon was first tried upon a congregation. The holiday kept half the regular congregation away, and the half that did come were there from idle curiosity more than anything else. But they who were present experienced a sensation. Although the sermon was in no wise intended as a "revival," there were more than a score of people who stood up and testified to their conversion through the pictures made before their eyes. The following Sunday the church was crowded. Two weeks later people were turned away. More seating accommodation was procured, but in two months even these could not hold all the people who clamored to become members of the congregation.



This sketch was to illustrate a sermon on the Crucifixion.

Conversions by the picture sermons became so numerous that other churches sent in requests for the assistance of the pastor of the Calvary church. He acceded to as many of these as possible, and the effect everywhere was like magic—the churches were packed and the conversions countless. And now there is not a better known or more popular clergyman in Brooklyn than the Rev. William E. Needham. Already ordained clergymen cannot, of course, follow his example, as they have not the artistic training, but many young theological students have written to Mr. Needham to say that in addition to their other studies they are taking up art in order to become, like him, artist-preachers.

"To say that the next generation of clergymen will have a goodly number of 'picturists' is not to make a rash statement," says the original minister.

To get the full benefit of a picture sermon one must see it and hear it personally. It is not the mere pictures that interest the audience—that is, not the fineness of them from an artistic point of view—for all of them are made within from one to three minutes each. The rapidity of the clergyman's crayons—they are in all colours — the forcible way in which they carry the story of the sermons to the minds of his hearers, and the impressions which they leave upon their minds, continue to do good long after the ordinary sermon would have passed out of the hearers' minds. I think that I will never forget the tremendous outburst of feeling among the audience at a seaside church some time ago,

The pictures are drawn with vari-coloured crayons. Here is the minister making a sketch of the Serpent in the Wilderness.

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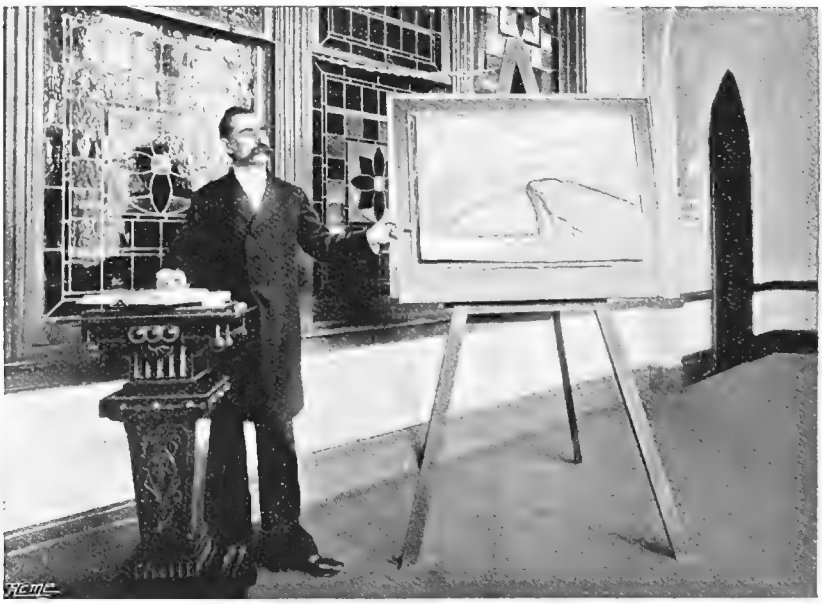
where Mr. Needham was assisting a famous song-preacher in a "service of song." It was being held for the purpose of collecting funds for missionary work. The sermon being over, Mr. Needham placed a fresh sheet of cardboard upon his easel, and, while the singer began the strains of a well-known hymn, Mr. Needham drew in two minutes a most realistic picture of a ship sinking at sea, with the hands of a hundred passengers held up in piteous appeal. "Throw out the life-line," he labelled the finished picture. "Throw out the life-line" was the title of the hymn, and "throw out the life-line" the audience certainly did, for the collection



The drawings are wonders of rapidity and effectiveness combined, and the remarks with which Mr. Needham accompanies them are pointed and eloquent.

taken up was the largest in the history of that particular church.

The pulpit occupied by Mr. Needham is of the conventional sort. To the left of it is the large easel, upon which is suspended a drawing-board with a gilt frame. Half-a-dozen sheets of cardboard are laid, one on top of the other, upon this drawing-board, and as each picture is finished, it is torn off and taken away by the sexton.

Opening the Bible at the chapter he has chosen, the artist-preacher announces his text, and while he begins his sermon in the usual manner, he picks up a piece of black crayon and draws one or two lines across the paper as he talks. Different coloured crayons follow one another, the preacher pausing now and then to face the audience directly and pound the air by way of emphasizing. The drawing does not interfere with his talking, neither does the latter interfere with the former, so that in probably three minutes he has finished a picture which illustrates what he has been saying. In this way he continues for thirty minutes, when his sermon is completed, five pictures having then been made in that time.

"My idea in making the picture sermon, in the first place," says the artist-preacher, "was to impress my hearers through the eyes, and then complete the impression through the ears by my words. Words, you know, are but arbitrary sounds—artificial things to the human mind—while pictures, on the contrary, are natural things—natural to the human mind. And as we best remember those things which strike us as natural, a picture sermon is better remembered and therefore will do much more good than a sermon of mere words and gesticulations.

"There are two things which I keep in mind before me while delivering a picture sermon—rapidity and effectiveness. It is difficult to draw and speak at the same time, because one has to do double work, but constant practice has made the thing comparatively easy for me now."

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